Truth and Power *Hans J. Morgenthau*

THE NEW REPUBLIC

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Fall Book Review

Essays, poems and reviews by

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T.R.B. *from Washington*

Paul Douglas

★ Ernest Gruening said, "You here, too?" We were at Washington airport, trying to find the gate for United Air Lines flight No. 560 from Chicago.

It was crisp and clear, with the dome of the Capitol in the distance. The crowd got bigger. A group of Negro women held a lateral banner, "National Council of Senior Citizens." Another stretch-out banner read, "Welcome Home, Mister D."

Politics are cruel, particularly American politics. There is always a man waiting to get you; waiting to outbid you for the job. There are no "safe" seats, as in the British system, to give a second chance to leaders who have been defeated the first time; no House of Lords as a final elevation. If our leaders fall we just throw them on the scrap heap. We thought about these things, standing there, trying not to catch anybody's eye because we were not sure of ourselves. We remembered Bob LaFollette Jr., who was voted "best senator" by the press gallery just before defeat. He was beaten by Joe McCarthy with the aid of a communist bloc of votes in Milwaukee.

We thought about George Norris and his arched eyebrows, which gave his face a look of perpetual surprise; he saved Muscle Shoals from Henry Ford and turned a great river from destroyer to benefactor, and then he was tossed on the dump after 39 years in Congress; beaten by a merry mortician named Ken Wherry. We remembered Kipling's wolf pack and the fate of the leader that misses its kill. (Wherry, by the way, objected to the phrase "democratic processes" because it was "too close to socialism.")

The big plane came in and they rolled the steps over to it and attendants looked on curiously. He must have seen us through the window. The textile workers were there, and the communications workers, and the Greater Washington Labor Council, and Hubert Humphrey had quietly appeared also.

A cheer rose and there coming out of the plane was the familiar rumpled figure, a blue-and-white scarf above the topcoat; the burly man towering above others even with stooped shoulders, the magnificent falcon nose, the cropped copious white hair like a helmet, and Emily Douglas beside him.

The cheer had a choke to it, and the hand-clapping something odd, or so we imagined. How do you express what is inside you by hitting your hands together?

Paul Douglas says that milking cows on his step-parents' farm in Maine was fine training for a politician's handshake, "the hand movement is about the same." He became a Quaker in 1920, but in 1935, on the day he and his wife heard Mussolini had sent Italy into the Ethiopian war, he abandoned pacifism.

Inside, in the airport corridor, a single spotlight and movie camera for a Chicago station opened up. Humphrey stood behind with his eyes glistening: the light, no doubt. We were never fonder of him.

What Do You Sing?

★ Why has Paul Douglas towered above the others? We felt it, even when we disagreed with him. Well, they were hollow men while he was solid, and he had courage. Norris said of Borah once, disdainfully, "He fights until he sees the whites of their eyes." Not Douglas – he slugged on for civil rights when it had no chance; for all the causes that were hopeless until they became commonplace; also for a truth-in-lending law which is yet to be enacted after 10 patient years. He is the university professor who became alderman of the fifth ward; the president of the American Economic Association in as unlikely a place, the Senate. A warhawk? Yes, we suppose so; but the type who enlisted at 50 as a Marine private and emerged with a bronze star for heroism, a crippled arm and an emotional commitment to block communist China in the Pacific.

In *The Jungle Book*, Kipling's Mowgli heard them chant, "Look well, look well, O Wolves!" For some reason we kept reverting to the political wolf pack. As for the crowd, it sang, "For he's a jolly good fellow." It was preposterously incongruous, all things considered, but what do you sing for a gallant warrior? He was defeated by a paradoxical cross fire: the white backlash on one side, because he fought for civil rights, and the Negroes on the other who stayed away from the polls in anger at Mayor Daley. Then there was Percy's tragedy, and his own age, perhaps. But it was just the age at which members from one-party states come to full seniority before mounting filibusters; the age at which Paul Douglas would have been supremely useful at the top.

There is much of George Norris in Douglas – simplicity and integrity, hatred of injustice; neither man a soaring orator but, on the other hand, what they said you believed. Sometimes we have watched Douglas debate, a craggy mountain of a man, not to be trapped, with scholarly mastery of detail and a genial response to turn away wrath. He was never personal. Neither he nor Norris belonged to the club (nor did Kefauver). On Douglas' wall hang pictures of his heroes: Lincoln, Old Bob LaFollette, Norris, John Peter Altgeld, Jane Addams, Clarence Darrow – they were his "club."

Norris has a dam named after him at Muscle Shoals. Douglas saved the Indiana Dunes. Maybe, someday, they will call them the Douglas Dunes. But anyway, children will play there, parents sun themselves and the strangled city breathe free.

In the airport corridor the interviewer asked questions and the crowd waited docilely like obedient Americans. Then Douglas turned finally to the misty-eyed 200. Outwardly he seemed perfectly composed. He cupped his big hands together, saying gently that he was more used to a bullhorn. "Nothing in my whole life," he said, "has touched me so much."

Then up the crowded corridor, and Humphrey escorted him to a car. Another warrior come home.

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Draft by Lot

The word of the Selective Service System is law. Its actions are not susceptible to independent review by the courts. Its prerogatives, it insists, were intended by Congress not to be tampered with – even by Congress. It is smug, self-satisfied, inured to criticism and quite convinced that it presides over a good, if not an equitable draft. Its 4,000-odd local boards have the power to reclassify Vietnam protesters and thus use conscription as an instrument of political repression. They can harass civil rights activists like Stokely Carmichael, exclude Mississippi Negroes from board service and threaten to take 26-year-old actors away from their mothers. The Selective Service System and its enduring Director, General Hershey, are institutions, and at the moment they are most concerned with their own self-preservation. In 1964 the activities of the System cost $40 million. It could all be replaced by a fish bowl.

Selective Service and the Pentagon are now involved in a squabble over how best to select draftees to feed the war machine. Secretary McNamara, who in Montreal last spring seemed to be in favor of a system of universal service in which all young men would put in a couple of years in the army or some acceptable alternative such as the Peace Corps, now advocates a national lottery – a computerized fish bowl which would randomly select draftees. Students would have the option of entering the draft pool before or after college. And presumably only men who had first been examined by the Defense Department and found physically fit would go into the pool. Everyone would take his chances and no one would have to spend eight years during his late teens and early twenties wondering when, or if, he would be called. Men would go into the draft pool at a certain age, say 19, or after completing college. If their names were called they would be drafted; if not they could plan their lives as civilians. There would be no favoritism expressed toward students over dropouts, whites over Negroes, chemists over artists. Everyone would be eligible and everyone's chances would be the same. The hitch in this scheme, of course, is that it might eliminate the need for a decentralized, inefficient, capricious system of local draft boards. Something new might have to be found for General Hershey and his system to do.

On November 11, the day after McNamara announced for the lottery idea, General Hershey dispatched his first officer, Colonel Daniel O. Omer, to tell the Selective Service Story to a national conference on the draft held in Washington by the American Veterans

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Committee. Colonel Omer said he assumed Congress would not change the draft law (the one we have is flexible enough), that as long as one man is taken and another is not there will always be inequity and criticism, and that a lottery would not work. However, instead of discussing the model proposed by McNamara and various members of Congress, Omer constructed a straw-man lottery and proceeded to beat on it. All men – including the fit and the unfit – would have to go into the pool if it were really to be equitable. To do anything else would be unfair. To do this would be unfeasible. A lottery would not provide for deferments for sole surviving sons, ministers, aviation cadet applicants and the Vice President of the United States. This clearly would not do. Congress specifically exempted these people: "Congress intended that there be deferments in the national interest, which precludes a selection by lot in which all are equally subject to the call and equally available for military service at this time." The colonel's most stressed point was that Congress simply never meant for us to have a national draft lottery; if it had it would have given us lots.

But Colonel Omer notwithstanding, provision can still be made in a lottery system for students to go to school, conscientious objectors to join the Peace Corps, and for occupational deferments in those rare instances when we have a 19-year-old Vice President. By next July when the present draft law expires Congress might even change its intent and opt for a national lottery.

"You can have Stokely Carmichael. George Hamilton is mine."

The Gravedoggle

When the American Legion met in Washington last summer, Congress rushed through a bill to amend the organization's charter so as to open membership to Vietnam veterans. Now Vietnam war dead, 126 in a recent week, provide a rallying point in the veterans' battle for a vast expansion of national cemeteries, for all veterans and their families. The veterans' groups insist that the government has reneged on a solemn promise to provide "hallowed ground" for the nation's "honored dead."

The government never promised space in national cemeteries for all veterans, nor has it set aside enough ground to come anywhere near fulfilling such an obligation. The 98 national cemeteries established soon after the Civil War are filling up. Five will be closed to further burials within the next year, 30 have had no space for years, Arlington, the largest, will be filled by 1985. All who have served honorably in the armed forces, their spouses, and certain dependent children are eligible for burial in what space there is, but no requirement was made that space be provided for all of them. Fewer than 10 percent of those buried in national cemeteries died in battle. Of the 50,000 buried in national cemeteries in the last year, 855 were victims of Vietnam. A soldier killed in battle is provided free burial by the government, whether in a private or a national cemetery.

The early cemeteries were largely located near Civil War battlefields. Virginia has 17, Tennessee 7; there are none in New England, Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin or Washington; none near Chicago, Los Angeles, Houston or Miami. Only five national cemeteries have been established since World War II, the last one in 1950. The Kennedy and Johnson administrations have resisted expansion, arguing that the cost of providing space for everyone eligible would be astronomical. Right now some 50 million are eligible, and the estimated cost of land, burial and cemetery maintenance for them is $7 billion to $8 billion.

The government now spends about $16 million a year on national cemeteries. All wartime veterans – those who were clerk-typists in the Pentagon or skied in Garmisch as well as those who fought in Korea – are given a $250 burial allowance by the Veterans Administration in addition to the one they receive from Social Security. All honorably discharged veterans, no matter where buried, may receive a free headstone.

The veterans' groups have already persuaded the

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Veterans Affairs Committee, which is more sympathetic to their claims than the Interior Committee, to assert jurisdiction over the cemetery issue. Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman Olin Teague (D, Texas) introduced a bill to transfer the supervision of the cemetery system out of the Pentagon and into the Veterans Administration – a double ploy which would give Teague's committee legislative control, and a more sympathetic executive agency administrative control. Over 50 bills to expand the cemetery system were introduced in the last Congress, and the pressure is growing. The White House, the Pentagon and Congress have been receiving an increasing amount of mail, much of it signed by widows, mothers and sisters, and much of it apparently inspired by the Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars. At the instigation of the VFW, General Eisenhower wrote to President Johnson to call his attention to the cemeteries. The Legion plans a major drive in the next Congress.

Elizabeth Drew

Why Israel Hit Back

Almagor

A fierce sun is beating down on me from above the bleak, treeless Syrian hills 500 yards away. Behind me is a little stony trench and a roughly made air raid shelter. Through my glasses I can see two big Soviet tanks dug in, and a sandbagged heavy machine-gun position. On the crest of the hill is another position. In the glare of the sun I can just make out the shapes of barrels of heavy guns. Syrian soldiers are moving about. In the middle of it all, among the barracks, is a slim white building with the letters UN. Right in front of me is a plowed field the Israelis call "de Gaulle's nose" because of its shape. Car headlamps are strung along telegraph poles to light up "de Gaulle's nose" so as to make a night attack more difficult. I am at Tel Katsir, an Israeli observation post southeast of the Sea of Galilee and east of the River Jordan.

When we arrived my guide went into the hut of the leader of the settlement, "just to tell them we are out there in case the Syrians open fire." But all was quiet. Then I motored close to a position north of the lake, where Syrians and Israelis face each other across a meandering dirt track on a hillside of bare red earth and a few trees: to the left Tel Aziziyat, the Syrian position, to the right two communal settlements, Dan and Davne. On the surrounding hill are more Syrian positions. Here too the Israeli fields are right under the guns of the Syrians. There was an exchange of fire a few days ago.

That day I motored along the northern sector of the Jordanian border and long stretches of the Syrian and Lebanese borders. One stony hill looks like another, for miles there is nobody in sight in the desolation brought about by centuries of neglect and deforestation. There is nothing easier than to infiltrate and it is being done all the time.

Parties of the two Palestinian Arab terrorist organizations, El Fattah and El Afisa, cross to blow up houses and installations and kill. They are based on Syrian territory and equipped with Soviet and Chinese weapons; they attack across Lebanese and Jordanian territory in order to embarrass the governments of those two countries and make it harder for the Israelis to retaliate against Syria.

The Israelis have 285,000 Arabs living in Israel. These Arabs are by no means committed to the survival of the state of Israel. The Eshkol government has taken the enormous risk of abolishing military rule in the Arab districts. If the Israeli government does not show that it is able and willing to defend itself, many more Arabs than the handful working actively for the Palestinian organizations will begin to stir.

The sun-soaked settlement of Almagor is about the only spot along the border where the Israelis look down on Syrian positions instead of being commanded by them. Until now the general Arab idea was to build up armies and to coordinate commands, strategy and tactics pending a regular war of 80 million Arabs against three million or so Israelis. But the Syrians and the Palestine Liberation groups have decided to try out Viet Cong methods against Israel without waiting for the big buildup. If the Israelis don't retaliate, the Syrian government and guerrilla tactics have been proved right; if they do retaliate, this is evidence of an Anglo - American - Israeli plot to overthrow Syria's Baathist regime.

The Chinese have 200 "instructors" in Syria, and Russia has been backing the Arabs to the hilt against Israel in the UN Security Council. The Russians have built a submarine base at Ras-el-Rani on the Syrian coast and a big radar tracking station at El Hessayeh in the northeast to cover the big US-NATO station at Diyarbekir in Turkey. Practically all monitoring of Soviet space shots in Central Asia is done from Diyarbekir.

Russia's chief aim is to get a firm foothold in the eastern Mediterranean through Syria and Egypt, naval bases on the Red Sea and the Syrian coast, positions to leapfrog and outflank Turkey. The new defense treaty between Egypt and Syria is a success for the Soviet Union. It does not specifically mention Israel, and President Nasser, deeply involved in the Yemen from where he hopes to take over Aden once the British have left, has only aircraft to spare for an undeclared war against Israel, and no food and no money;

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but the party paper of the Syrian government demanded a few days after the signing of the treaty that Egypt should at once implement its military clauses.

The Syrian government has pledged itself to fight a Viet Cong war against Israel and also to overthrow the regime of King Hussein in Jordan. Yet Hussein has to seem pleased with the Syrian-Egyptian treaty, as the beginning of a new line-up against Israel. The Palestine Liberation Front is setting up bases in Jordan and defying his authority, figuring that a Viet Cong type war against Israel attempted from Jordan will bring about the end of Hussein whatever its success in Israel. Thus everyone is playing for high stakes. Soviet-Arab dominance of the Security Council has reduced the UN role to the passive one of merely registering what the parties are saying. Tel Katsir, my first observation post, means Harvest Hill. The harvest is becoming one of steel and fire. LEO MURAY

Truth and Power

The Intellectuals and the Johnson Administration

by Hans J. Morgenthau

It is commonplace to say that the relations between President Johnson and the intellectual community are not what they ought to be. The President has bitterly complained in private about the alienation of the intellectuals and has attributed it, probably thinking of John F. Kennedy's better luck, to a snobbish contempt for his Texas style and upbringing. In public, the President has gone out of his way to woo the intellectual community in word and deed. He has established in the White House what amounts to the position of an "intellectual-in-residence," who is supposed to keep the channels open between the President and the intellectual community. He has appointed eminent academics to important positions, and he has assigned to intellectuals a regular place in the social life of the White House. He has sent out a task force to scout the campuses for "new ideas," and he has asked the president of the Ford Foundation to perform the same task in the intellectual community of New York. He has dedicated two speeches, at Princeton on May 11, and in honor of the Brookings Institution on September 29, 1966, to paying his respects to the intellectuals. In order to show how much he respects them, he pointed with pride to the fact that "the major appointments I have made in the last two-and-one-half years, collectively hold 758 advanced degrees," and quoted Macaulay, MacLeish, and Leonardo da Vinci.

Yet there has been no improvement in the relations between the President and the intellectuals. There could not have been, since the problem never has been correctly put, and, hence, what has been done to solve it has been irrelevant or has only served to aggravate it.

The intellectual lives in a world which is both separate from, and potentially intertwined with, that of the politician. The two worlds are separate because they are oriented toward different ultimate values: the intellectual seeks truth; the politician, power. These different orientations by no means imply the superiority of the intellectual over the politician. I argued against the intellectual's snobbish condescension toward the politician in July, 1961, addressing myself to the intellectuals of the Kennedy era. Nor does this different orientation imply that the intellectual has a monopoly of truth while the politician lives in the darkness of error. A highly intelligent and skillful politician such as President Johnson is much closer to the practical truth in matters political than the intellectual who may be intelligent but is not wise in the ways of the world. The only point that I want to make here is that the decisive distinction between the intellectual and the politician lies in their orientation toward different ultimate values. In his search for the truth, the ideal type of intellectual is oblivious to power; in his pursuit of power, the politician at best will use truth as a means to his ends. Yet the two worlds are also potentially in-

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tertwined; for truth has a message that is relevant to power, and the very existence of power has a bearing both upon the expression and recognition of truth.

The two worlds are not only separate from, and potentially intertwined with each other, they are also hostile to each other. Truth threatens power, and power threatens truth. Power, in order to be effective, must appear as something other than what it actually is. Deception – deception of others and of self – is inseparable from the exercise of power. As John Adams put it: "Power always thinks it has a great soul and vast views beyond the comprehension of the weak and that it is doing God's service when it is violating all His laws. Our passions, ambitions, avarice, love and resentment, etc., possess so much metaphysical subtlety and so much overpowering eloquence that they insinuate themselves into the understanding and the conscience and convert both to their party."

Conversely, truth, by unmasking the pretensions of power, at the very least disturbs the powers-that-be; for it puts power on the intellectual and moral defensive. Furthermore, it questions the purposes and processes of power and thereby endangers the very framework within which power operates. Truth may even challenge the status quo of power on the level of practical politics if it is supported by sufficiently powerful interests. Once those interests have won the struggle for power, yesterday's truth becomes today's ideology, justifying, rationalizing, and covering up for the new powers-that-be. Then a new cycle begins, and truth again challenges power.

To this existential estrangement and potential interconnectedness between truth and power, between the intellectual and the political world, the intellectual can respond in four different ways: by retreat into the ivory tower, by prophetic confrontation, by expert advice, by surrender.

Repelled by the incompatibility of truth and power, the intellectual can separate himself from the political sphere altogether. He can tell the powers-that-be what Archimedes told the Roman soldier: "Do not disturb my circles." He can say with Leonardo da Vinci, when he was reproached by Michelangelo for his indifference to the fate of Florence, that the study of beauty occupies his whole heart. Finding with Goethe that "the political song is an ugly song," he can pursue the good, the true, and the beautiful within his own chosen sphere, as though the political sphere did not exist. Great works of the intellect have thus been achieved, as Archimedes', Leonardo's, and Goethe's examples prove. But this retreat into the ivory tower disposes of the problem by evading it. It solves it for the intellectual as a private individual, but it leaves it unsolved both in its philosophic dimensions and insofar as it bears upon the interests of the community.

Second, the intellectual can maintain the integrity of his position as an intellectual by remaining outside the political sphere, yet he can try to make the knowledge and insight peculiar to him count for the purposes and processes of politics. He is concerned with, but personally detached from, politics. He looks at the political sphere from without, judging it by, and admonishing it in the name of, the standards of truth accessible to him. He speaks, in the biblical phrase, truth to power. He tells power what it can do and what it ought to do, what is feasible and what is required. What he has to say about politics may have political consequences, which he may welcome or deplore as the case may be. But these consequences are a mere by-product, hoped but not worked for, of his search for the truth.

The intellectual can enter the political sphere as an expert. As such, he does not question the purposes and processes of government but accepts as given the framework within which the government operates. He tells the powers-that-be what they need to know in order to achieve a particular result and how they must go about achieving it. Given a certain objective, of which he may or may not approve, he gives advice as to how to achieve it. The ultimate standard by which he orients himself is still the truth and not power, even though he puts his truth at the service of power.

The Betrayal

Only a small step separates these independent positions from that in which the intellectual becomes an agent of the powers-that-be while maintaining his pretenses, and drawing upon his prestige, as an intellectual. The intellectual here ceases to be an intellectual, to be judged by the standards of truth, and becomes an ideologue, that is, a political agent, subject to the criteria of power. He invests popular passions with the dignity of reason and power with the appearance of truth. He justifies what politicians do in terms not only of necessity, as did Machiavelli, but also of truth and virtue. Here we are in the presence of what Julien Benda forty years ago called "*La Trahison des Clercs*" (The Betrayal of the Intellectuals). Their betrayal does not just consist in the exchange of one calling for another, which can be respectable and even worthwhile. It consists in the exploitation of one calling on behalf of another, in the false pretense of politicians dedicated to the pursuit of power, who make it appear as though they were still intellectuals dedicated to the pursuit of truth.

The powers-that-be can concern themselves with the voice of truth, that questions their purposes and processes, in four different ways: they can heed, silence, discredit, or corrupt it. If they heed it they

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embark upon the most promising but also the most complicated and risky course of action available to them. It is the most promising because it maximizes the chances of political success, harmonizing political action with objective reality. It is the most complicated and risky course to take because the awareness of the truth informing purpose and policy must go hand in hand with the – now conscious – denial of the truth through the deception which makes political action acceptable to the electorate.

It is much simpler, and therefore also much more common, for the powers-that-be, if they are confronted with unpalatable truth, first to try to corrupt it, and if they do not succeed to try to discredit it, and if they do not succeed in that to silence it. The government's ability to corrupt derives from its power to reward those who are willing to be corrupted. Its ability to discredit stems from the authority of power with which it speaks and from the influence which it is able to exert upon the mass media of communications. Its ability to silence results from its ability to corrupt – silence being a kind of passive corruption – and ultimately from the ability to make totalitarian use of the police and the criminal laws.

Reflecting in the light of these theoretical considerations upon the relations that exist at present between the intellectuals of America and the government of the United States, one cannot escape, however much one would like to, two conclusions: the administration has tried to discredit, silence and corrupt, and it has in good measure succeeded with the support of the intellectuals themselves.

Johnson's Basic Defect

The President's attitude toward the intellectuals is determined by a basic philosophic defect: the confusion between consensus and the consent of the governed, to which I pointed in the January 22, 1966 issue of this magazine. Both must be sharply distinguished. Yet the President assumes, and in good measure acts upon the assumption, that they are identical. Consensus is the general precondition for any civilized government; the consent of the governed is the precondition for a particular democratic government. All politically civilized societies owe their continuing existence to a consensus concerning the foundations of society. Thus the citizens of a democratic society conclude among themselves, as it were, a social contract in which they agree upon their common purposes, the procedures by which these purposes are to be effectuated, the institutions which are intended to serve them.

The consent of the governed does not concern itself with the fundamentals of the democratic polity, which it takes for granted as vouchsafed by the consensus, but with the specifics of a particular democratic government, at a particular point in time. Without consensus no civilized political society can survive; without the consent of the governed a democratic government cannot survive in power. The dissent of the governed, in turn, far from being tainted with the stigma of disloyalty since it rises from the common foundation of consensus, is a prerequisite of democratic vitality. The vitality of democratic competition is predicated upon the chance, in principle open to all, that today's dissenters may carry the day tomorrow.

By equating the consent of the governed with consensus, the President is compelled to equate dissent with disloyalty. Thus the President, in his Chicago speech of May 17th of this year, can refer to the critics of his Vietnam policies as "some Nervous Nellies and some who will become frustrated and bothered and break ranks under the strain. And some will turn on their own leaders and their own country, and on our own fighting men." Commenting on Mr. Nixon's criticism of the Manila communiqué, the President in his press conference of November 4, 1966, charged "some of the politicians" with "not trying to clarify it but confuse it," and concluded: "And we oughtn't to have men killed because we try to fuzz up something." And he can say, according to Rowland Evans and Robert Novak in *The Washington Post* of August 17, 1966, that "Ambassador Dobrynin seems to have more votes in the Senate than the President." John D. Pomfret summed up the President's attitude in *The New York Times* of July 25, 1966: "Before yesterday's whirlwind tour that took him into Indiana, Kentucky and Illinois, the President appeared to question the patriotism of his critics in public on only one major occasion. That was in Chicago in mid-May. . . . But yesterday, Mr. Johnson, in three speeches, aimed caustic, accusatory remarks at critics of American involvement in the war. He seemed almost to be asking which side they were on." *Time* magazine of June 24, 1966 summarized the President's position in these terms: "Johnson is not content to let history make its own judgments. In a sense, he may be a victim of what historian James MacGregor Burns calls the 'corruption of consensus.' In *The Crucible of Leadership* . . . Burns elaborates: 'No matter how benign a government may be, it will be tempted to manipulate public opinion, to cover up mistakes, and to cast doubt on the patriotism or at least the honesty of outside critics. The more that government represents a consensus, or claims to, the more tempted it may be to succumb to . . . these tendencies."

I have taken a look at Woodrow Wilson's and Franklin D. Roosevelt's attitudes toward domestic dissent, and I have been struck not by the similarity but by the difference between their democratic ethos and the climate of opinion prevailing today. They were harsh

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and devastating in the criticism of their critics, but they did not question the legitimacy of their position. They remained bound by the ethos of free discussion which the late Professor Zechariah Chafee, Jr. has thus defined: "The First Amendment protects two kinds of interests in free speech. There is an individual interest, the need of many men to express their opinions on matters vital to them if life is to be worth living, and a social interest in the attainment of truth, so that the country may not only adopt the wisest course of action but carry it out in the wisest way. This social interest is especially important in war time. Even after war has been declared there is bound to be a confused mixture of good and bad arguments in its support, and a wide difference of opinion as to its objects. Truth can be sifted out from falsehood only if the government is vigorously and constantly cross-examined, so that the fundamental issues of the struggle may be clearly defined, and the war may not be diverted to improper ends, or conducted with an undue sacrifice of life and liberty, or prolonged after its just purposes are accomplished." (*Free Speech in the United States*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1941, p. 33.)

It illuminates the problem that concerns us here that the President is more tolerant of dissent coming from within the political sphere than he is of dissent from without. Being in an extraordinarily pervasive measure committed to the pursuit of power, he can understand dissent that is at the service of power and try to handle it in accordance with the rules of the power game. Dissent that speaks in the name of truth, without regard for power, must sound to him as a voice both strange and threatening. It must sound strange because it has nothing to contribute directly to what is the overriding purpose of his being: the pursuit of power; and it must sound threatening, for here is a realm of human existence that owes nothing to power, that is indifferent to power, that, given the restraints of the democratic ethos, is even immune to power. That power be limited by power, the men of power must take in their stride; that power should be limited by truth is an intolerable affront.

It is therefore not by accident that among the dissenting politicians Senator Fulbright has become the *bête noire* of the Johnson administration. For Senator Fulbright is in the ambivalent position of being both a politician and an intellectual. He acts within the framework of power, but from time to time speaks with the voice of truth, regardless of power. That ambivalence impairs his effectiveness as a politician and as a purveyor of truth. Thus he has the worst of both worlds. Both the intellectuals and the politicians suspect him. The former ask what might be his political purpose when he seems to speak the truth. To the latter he appears as a kind of Trojan horse, a horse, as it were, of a different, nonpolitical color. Since that voice of truth, speaking outrageously from within the political arena, could neither be silenced nor corrupted, it had to be discredited. Thus the President has never deigned to argue with the senator but has ridiculed and mimicked him and treated him with contempt in public and to his face. White-House-broken journalists have taken their cue and have treated a brilliant, knowledgeable, and high-minded public servant as though he were an ignorant, irresponsible fool.

The way Senator Fulbright has been treated is not an individual aberration. It is but a particularly spectacular and distressing example of a general policy. The White House "project Morgenthau," which last year had the task to disseminate "information" about me reflects the same general attitude. Unable to recognize the autonomy of the intellectual sphere and to accept the positive function the intellectual as an independent agent is able to perform for politics, the President has only two courses of action to choose from: he must either silence and corrupt the intellectuals by making them into his agents, or he must discredit those who cannot be silenced and corrupted. Wanting desperately to have the intellectuals' approval and support and thinking only in terms of power, the President either embraces those who are embraceable or tries to destroy those who resist his advances. Thus the intellectuals become either the tools or the victims of his power. This is his tragedy: by trying to overwhelm the intellectuals he destroys them one way or another, and by doing this he destroys any independent contribution, except expertise, the intellectuals could make to the enlightenment and the greatness of his power.

John Roche's Philosophy

How this tragic misunderstanding has the exactly opposite practical effects from those intended is clearly demonstrated by the approach of the President's new "intellectual-in-residence." Professor John D. Roche expressed his philosophy after his appointment in an interview with Jimmy Breslin according to *The Chicago Sun Times* of September 18, 1966 as follows: "The term intellectual has been batted about too loosely. When you mention intellectuals today, who do you mean? There is a broad group. The ones we talk about when we mention the President's relations with them are only a small body of self-appointed people who live in affluent alienation on Cape Cod and fire off salvos against the vulgarity of the masses. But this is a well-orchestrated outfit with fine Madison Ave. techniques. Their way of criticizing makes the group seem bigger than it is. The main problem is that an awful lot of these guys prefer style to performance."

To the question "These alienated intellectuals, who

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are they?" Professor Roche gave this answer: "Mainly the New York artsy-craftsy set. They're in the *Partisan Review* and *The New York Review of Books* and publications like that. The West Side jackalbins, I call them. They intend to launch a revolution from Riverside Drive. Names, there are plenty of names who write for them. Alfred Kazin writes, then Irving Howe and Norman Mailer."

"He was talking about a small group of people," comments Mr. Breslin, "who number maybe 100 and who live on the West Side of New York. Their role in life is to be intellectuals. Their main publication is the *Partisan Review*. This is a small magazine with no picture on the cover and for which, at one time or another in his career, everybody in university life has written articles. The West Side intellectuals concerned with the magazine have no real academic connections. They live in those old, once highly fashionable apartment houses which tower over the Hudson River. And they send out a flow of words against the war in Vietnam and against Lyndon Johnson. Their out-of-town copy comes from Cambridge and Berkeley and, in the Midwest, from Prof. Hans Morgenthau of the University of Chicago." With the exception of Norman Mailer and Alfred Kazin, these intellectuals "are mainly high class illiterates. A story by Irving Howe, for example, should be edited with flea powder."

In *The New York Times Magazine* of October 14, 1965, Professor Roche summarizes my political position by referring to me as "a scholarly, urbane European intellectual: his major premise is that Americans cannot be trusted with power and since Johnson (like Kennedy, who got the same treatment) is an American, there is little more to say." It is not necessary to point out that this summary of my political position is pure fabrication, and it cannot be lost even on an obtuse reader that here an attempt is being made to exploit a residual American xenophobia in order to question my credentials.

In April of this year, Professor John Kenneth Galbraith referred to Vietnam as "a country which has not the slightest strategic importance." Here is Professor Roche's answer according to *Time* magazine of May 6, 1966: "Galbraith reminds me of the Lord High Executioner in *The Mikado*. He's got them on his list, and they'll none of them be missed – Vietnam, Thailand, you name it. I guess what makes a country obscure is whether Ken Galbraith likes it or not." Professor Galbraith may be dead wrong, but Professor Roche has not advanced an argument to prove it.

These remarks are samples of a uniquely personal style which is characterized by three organically connected qualities: the refusal to deal with an argument on its own merits, a cavalier attitude toward ascertainable facts, and the attempt to discredit by invective. Those are the qualities not of the intellectual but of the demagogue. Professor Roche has himself denied that he has the task to provide a link between the intellectual community and the White House, making the voice of truth audible at the seat of power. His own pronouncements make clear by implication what he conceives as his official task: to be the hatchet man who will try to ruin the reputation of those intellectuals who dare openly to disagree with his master. This task reflects indeed on the level of journalistic practice the President's own philosophy. Given that philosophy, one must admit, not without a sense of embarrassment that by making Professor Roche his "intellectual-in-residence," the President has chosen well.

The Silent and Corrupt

However, this frontal attack upon the reputation of the dissenting intellectuals is an act of desperation resorted to only against those whom the government has failed to silence or corrupt. And large segments of the intellectual world have indeed been silenced or corrupted. This is especially true of those segments which are professionally concerned with the activities of government. If one examines, for instance, the lists of intellectuals who have gone on record against the war in Vietnam, one is struck by the relative paucity of political scientists. One is also struck by the frequency with which those who remain silent in public express their opposition in private. It must also be noted that some intellectuals have attacked their dissenting colleagues with unaccustomed violence and with arguments so tortuous and inconsistent as to be inexplicable on purely intellectual grounds while, unknown to the public, they were working for the government part-time or accepted a government position shortly afterwards. Finally, there is the type of intellectual who habitually moves from the intellectual into the political sphere and back again and whose overt political views change with these movements and with changes in the climate of political opinion.

Three factors account for this susceptibility of the intellectual community to remaining silent and being corrupted: the conformism of American society, personal ambition, and inducements which the government holds out to those who do not openly dissent.

American society, lacking in good measure in those historic, ethnic, and cultural values and institutions to which traditional societies owe their integration, has had to rely for its survival upon unorganized social pressures which would keep its members in line. To be a "regular fellow" or a "member of the team," that is, not to deviate from what everybody thinks and does, thus has become a virtue in itself. As Mr. Justice Holmes put it: ". . . I have no practical criticism [with

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regard to laws] except what the crowd wants."

This pressure to conform is powerfully reinforced by personal ambition. Academics in particular, that is, intellectuals, who are professionally committed to the pursuit of truth, are not immune to the aspirations for power, academic and political. In order to avoid an open conflict between those potentially incompatible goals, in order to be able to pursue the truth without jeopardizing the satisfaction of personal ambition, the intellectual must concern himself with issues, and deal with them in ways, which are non-controversial because they neither deviate from the standards of society nor invite dissent from the policies of the government. Thus the intellectual deals with "safe" subjects in a "safe" manner. Yet on the great issues of political life, which are controversial by definition, he must remain silent. He does not need to be silenced; he silences himself. Silence with regard to these issues is the passive manifestation of conformity.

Silence is the minimal compliance with the requirements of both conformity and ambition. Both requirements are consummated in the positive support of whatever policies the government pursues. This compliance is in good measure the intellectuals' spontaneous act; it is an act of protective mimicry. However, the government does not leave the silence and subservience of the intellectuals to chance. It has at its disposal a plethora of varied, subtle, and insidious instruments with which to forge reliable ties with large segments of the intellectual world. Thus the "military-industrial complex," to which President Eisenhower referred in his farewell address, is duplicated by an academic-political complex in which the interests of the government are inextricably intertwined with the interests of large groups of academics. These ties are both formal and informal, and the latter are the more dangerous to intellectual freedom as they consist of the intellectuals' unconscious adaptation to imperceptible social and political pressures.

The intimate connection which research contracts have established between the government and the universities has recently been brought to public attention. It stands to reason that an academic who is working on such a contract or who expects to work on one is not likely to question the basic policies of the government, either within his contractual research or outside it. Thus the interests and expectations of the government not only determine the subject matter of contractual research but also influence ever so subtly its scope and in a certain measure its results. Beyond these specific limitations, the connection with the government cannot help but narrow the scope and direction of the scholar's search for truth.

Aside from these formal contractual relations with which the government is able to keep large segments of the academic community silent or render them subservient, the government disposes of a whole gamut of professional and social rewards serving the same purpose, from appointments and consultantships to foreign travel and invitations to social functions at the White House. By adroitly promising, dispensing, and withholding them, it keeps a large segment of the academic community at bay. The academic, by accepting one or the other of these rewards, enters into a subtle and insidious relationship with the government, which imperceptibly transforms his position of independent judge to that of client and partisan. In consequence, his intellectual function is also transformed. In the measure that he values these social rewards and professional advantages more highly than his commitment to the truth, he becomes a political ideologue, justifying morally and rationalizing intellectually the policies of the government. Yet he performs this ideological function while he draws upon his prestige as a scholar. Thus his reputation as an independent searcher after the truth is put at the service of the government, and what is but the ideological defense of a partisan position, an intellectual gloss upon power, is made to appear as the objective truth.

Enjoying Rape

Nor is subservience induced by subtle or sometimes not so subtle governmental pressure limited to the academic community. That subservience pervades the whole intellectual life of the nation, and it is particularly marked in the mass media. A future historian, one might hope, will write the story of the far-flung, systematic, and largely successful efforts embarked upon by the government to suppress the truth and to bend it to its political interests. Great newspapers have published articles written by reputable scholars purporting to be an objective account of the personnel and the processes of the government, while they were for all practical purposes commissioned by the White House. Correspondents stationed in Vietnam either transcribe the official briefings or hide the truth in an Aesopian language, requiring a special perspicacity to unravel. Some of them, after their return home, have reported facts of which no trace was to be found in their dispatches from the field. And some have attached to these factual accounts policy conclusions which have no logical connection with the former. Upon this larger intellectual sphere, as upon the academic community, direct governmental and imperceptible social pressures are brought to bear, and what social prudence and political opportunism will not achieve, direct government intervention will bring about: to silence and to corrupt the truth. The intellectuals of America have indeed been raped; but many of them have looked

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forward to the experience and are enjoying it.

But even those intellectuals who are most vociferous in their commitment to the powers-that-be are so committed only for the time being. They betrayed their calling as intellectuals in order to get power. But in truth they are only in the presence, not in the possession, of it. They are not in the seats of power but only at court. Thus they are ready at any time to cry: "The king is dead, long live the king." And it is amusing and saddening to witness the intellectual acrobatics of some of the intellectual courtiers of King John's court who entered cautiously the court of King Lyndon, only to move for the exit when the star of pretender Robert seemed to be on the rise. In other words, President Johnson has the support of the intellectual ideologues only because he has power and as long as he has it. Let power slip from his hands, and his intellectual servants will look for a new master.

Here is indeed the tragedy of both President Johnson and of the intellectuals of America as well. It results not so much from the arrogance as from the blindness of power. That blindness has deformed the relationship between the intellectuals and the powers-that-be, which, as we have seen, by its very nature cannot help being uneasy and precarious. The intellectuals of America who have preserved their independence are faced with a presidential power of unprecedented magnitude. That power seeks not only their support, to which it is entitled, but also their submission. These intellectuals must maintain their own regard for the truth in the face of a massive official disregard for it, which goes far beyond the necessities of the political game. The official pronouncements on President Kennedy's assassination and the Vietnam war could perhaps still be justified in terms of reason of state, although they have made civilized public debate with public officials virtually impossible. But the habit of playing fast and loose with the truth is a different matter, regardless of the public ends which might justify such play for the purpose of enjoying another dimension of power.

Not Just Brains To Be Picked

The President can think of intellectuals only as holders of college degrees who bring prestige to his administration, and purveyors of ideas who improve its policies. But that is not what defines the intellectuals' function for the political sphere. Intellectuals are not sitting in their offices producing ideas like so many items to be picked up and acted upon or filed away by the political authorities. The President does not need new ideas, except in the narrow technical sense; the ideas necessary for good government are part of the public record. What he needs is not ideas but wisdom, and to provide it is indeed the natural task of the independent intellectual. What Jacob Burckhardt has said of historians is indeed true of all intellectuals: they aim "to make us not clever for one day but wise forever." What the President needs, then, is an intellectual father-confessor, who dares to remind him of the brittleness of power, of its arrogance and blindness, of its limits and pitfalls; who tells him how empires rise, decline, and fall, how power turns to folly, empires to ashes. He ought to listen to that voice and tremble.

It is indeed the privilege of power to close its ears to such reminders and ride roughshod over those who refuse to do its bidding. It is the privilege of power to deem itself omnipotent. It has been said of the British parliament that it can do anything, except to make a man into a woman. The President of the United States, too, can do almost anything. He can play with truth, deform and discard it at his whim. But there is one thing he cannot do: he cannot still the voice of truth. As long as there are men in this country or anywhere else in the world who will speak truth to power, the voice of truth will be heard at least by some. If it should come to pass, which is technologically possible, that a worldwide totalitarianism were to silence the last voice of truth on earth, one could then say, modifying a famous statement of Kant, that it would make no sense for human beings to continue to exist.

What makes this deformation of the relationship between the intellectuals and the political sphere tragic for the intellectuals is that what is true in general is true with particular poignancy for Americans: that power needs truth to be wise and great. This nation owes its very existence, its institutions, and its ethos to a rare conjunction of intellectuality and power. *The Federalist* is not only a practical political document, but it is also an unsurpassed compendium of political truth. Abraham Lincoln combined a commitment to power and a dedication to truth, crowned with political success, of which history knows no other instance. Thus the rejection of the independent intellectuals by the powers-that-be in contemporary America would be unwise and self-defeating in any case but is particularly so in the case of America; for it cuts off the political sphere from its vital historic roots of wisdom and ultimate success.

In the face of this misunderstanding and scorn for the function the intellectual can and must perform for the political sphere, the intellectuals of America can do only one thing: live by the standard of truth which is their peculiar responsibility as intellectuals and by which the men of power will ultimately be judged as well. Thus they will remain faithful not only to their calling but also to the spirit of their nation. For America was founded not upon power blindly and unrestrainedly pursued, but upon power informed and restrained by truth.

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STANLEY KAUFFMANN *The Looks of Books*

The fourth scene of Shaw's *Saint Joan*, set in 1430, opens with the Earl of Warwick turning the pages of an illuminated book while his chaplain writes at a nearby table. Says Warwick to the busy chaplain:

> "Now this is what I call workmanship. There is nothing on earth more exquisite than a bonny book, with well-placed columns of black writing in beautiful borders, and illuminated pictures cunningly inset. But nowadays, instead of looking at books, people read them. A book might as well be one of those orders for bacon and bran that you are scribbling."

The decadent habit of reading, as Warwick feared, subsequently increased; and, as he also feared, the reader's regard for the thing read – the physical book – declined considerably. But there have always been at least some publishers and readers who were interested in good book design. In this century a few American publishers have furthered this interest.

Publishers occasionally discuss the advisability of making their books identifiable as coming from a particular house, but, until recently, only one American house had really achieved that aim. Every Knopf book does not look like every other Knopf book, but there certainly is a recognizable Knopf "look." Now there is another firm that, in my view, has established an admirable "look" in its books. In the majority of cases I can recognize Atheneum books almost at once. Recognizable or not, they are consistently handsome. Their distinctiveness and distinction are the work of one man, Harry Ford, who, among the several gifted American book designers now in practice, seems to me preeminent. In the seven short years of Atheneum's existence, he has made the firm "visible" as a firm, while ministering to each book's individuality.

I went to see Mr. Ford recently at the Atheneum offices, which are in a five-floor former private residence on East 38th Street in New York. For space reasons, they must move to conventional offices next spring, but their plan was to follow the model of those London publishers who occupy former residences – which is pleasant for them and somehow comfily reassuring to authors.

Mr. Ford is in early middle age, quiet, with none of the enforced yet modified bohemianism one sometimes finds in the art departments of Madison Avenue. On the top floor of the present quarters in the ex-residence, he showed me the office that he shares with two associates, then conducted me through a large old-fashioned bathroom (about half the size of his office) to a tiny conference room much smaller than the bathroom.

I explained that I wanted to learn more about the man who had created the happily identifiable look of this house's books. Had it been a conscious intent from the beginning to give their books a family resemblance?

"Very much so. We're a trade house – that is, we concentrate on books for the general reader, not text or specialized books – and we're not a large house. We never want to be a large house. We wanted to establish an identity quickly, in a fiercely competitive situation – an identity recognizable by that general reader."

Did he design all the books?

"Everything except children's books. I do about 50 or 60 books a year."

Graphic impressions are hard to render in words, but would he try to characterize the overall style and feeling of his designs?

"It *is* difficult to verbalize. I'd say I was trying for an 18th-century feeling. Type-faces like those originated by Baskerville and the Frys and Bell and Bulmer."

Any influence of 19th-century work like William Morris and the Kelmscott Press?

"Quite the reverse. Morris' work seems to me too black and heavy. I like cleanness of style, openness, a feeling of space. No fussiness or obtrusive ornamentation. A bold and broad page."

The chief influence then was 18th-century English?

"Well, I also admire the work of the Didot family." The two Didot brothers and their cousin – French type-designers, printers, and publishers in the first half of the 19th century – are commonly held to have set the style for the French book as we know it. "A lot of our title-pages are related to the Didot manner."

Would he name the first Atheneum book that came to mind whose design he was especially proud of?

"Eric Bentley's *The Life of the Drama*."

And that was just a "book" book. No illustrations, no special shape or unusual typographical requirements.

"Exactly. Good design applies to just a 'book' book as much as to the most complicated illustrated folio volume."

What about the jackets? Did he design many of them himself?

"A lot of them, particularly the typographic or type-design jackets. I do all the poetry jackets – we publish a good deal of poetry – and much of the nonfiction. Bentley's book, for instance. For the other jackets, I select the artists and confer with them. So, one way or another, I'm involved with all the jackets."

One distinguishing mark of his books was the use of brightly colored endpapers. Did that add to the expense?

He shrugged. "A trifle. Hardly at all. Perhaps a half-cent a copy."

Another attractive feature of many of his books was their longer, narrower shape. Like *The Firedrake* by Cecelia Holland.

He nodded, pleased. "Usually it's a difference of only about a quarter of an inch in width. Say, a five-and-three-eighths-inch page instead of five-and-five-eighths. That little difference makes a book look less conventional, more inviting to hold, I think."

Was *that* more expensive?

"No, not really. Certain standard-cut sheets fit the presses more completely, and we sacrifice a small amount of press area for this effect. Not consequential."

Then, as a general statement and

(Continued on page 46)

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Robert Penn Warren: The Drama of the Past

by John Wain

Robert Penn Warren's reputation, very high in his own country, has never really penetrated to England. *All the King's Men*, of course, made its impact and is remembered; but, for the most part, one's impression is that Mr. Warren's work, like certain excellent local wines, does not travel. There are good and honorable reasons for this. He is a very American writer. In spite of repeated exposure to England and Continental Europe, beginning as a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford in the late 1920's, his subject matter and outlook are peculiarly of America.

Selected Poems . . . 1923-1966
by Robert Penn Warren
(Random House; $7.95)

Then, of course, we must ask, of which America? Not, assuredly, the America of Bernard Malamud or Saul Bellow; not the America of Nelson Algren or the Beats; not the America seen by Ralph Ellison or James Baldwin; not New York, not (though it is very WASP) the intellectual-aristocratic Northeast of Robert Lowell; not (though one senses a sympathy with Catholicism) the Irish-Catholic America of J. F. Powers. All these are authentic American worlds, and all are more or less liable to misunderstanding in the minds of foreign readers. Mr. Warren's world is no less so. His roots are not merely in the South but at a very specific point in the South; his early allegiance was to the "Fugitive" group of writers, centered in Nashville in the 1920's and presenting its work in the magazine, *The Fugitive* (1922-25). The South has always had a literature of its own, but there can never have been a more vital and interesting group than these fugitives, who included Allen Tate, John Crowe Ransom, Donald Davidson, Merrill Moore, Andrew Lytle, and Laura Riding – not forgetting Mr. Warren himself, who was admitted to the group at the age of 16. Allen Tate, who shared rooms with him at this time, has put on record an affectionate memoir of Warren, in the first flush of his youthful admiration for T. S. Eliot, decorating their apartment with murals depicting scenes from *The Waste Land*: "I remember particularly the rat creeping softly through the vegetation, and

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the typist putting a record on the gramophone."

All these writers were Southerners who accepted, in broad outline, the traditional values of the South, though they were fiercely critical of the sentimental clutter which had grown up around these values and threatened to choke them. These are Warren's roots. He was, in the twenties, a modern young Southerner, a graduate of Vanderbilt University, a youthful ornament of the active and original Nashville group, a Tennessee man through and through, with an agricultural family background and the good red clay still on his shoes.

Since then, four decades have washed by, and though I know hardly anything about Mr. Warren's personal history, what little I do know suggests that his life has led him a long way, sometimes a wearisomely long way, from that Tennessee starting-point. Long academic years in New England, official posts in Washington, substantial visits to Europe – and marriage to Eleanor Clark must in itself represent a thoroughgoing Europeanization, for she knows Europe as inwardly and writes of it as passionately as any American since Henry James – all these have necessarily added layer after layer to the sensibility, at once modern and traditional, of the eager Nashville boy with his knowledge of farming ways and his murals out of *The Waste Land*. But once a Southerner, always a Southerner. The physical presence of New England has entered Mr. Warren's sensibility; so has the Mediterranean; his years as a highly successful academic teacher have added a judicial weightiness to his tone; yet, after all this has been said, it remains true that, in his imaginative life as in everyone else's, the first twenty years were the most important, what went in first went in deepest, the Nashville boy is still there and it is still his energy that drives the whole mass along.

This realization is sharply pointed up by the fact that Mr. Warren's gift, in poetry, is mainly autobiographical and descriptive. He is an excellent craftsman, and his craft shows to best advantage when he is bringing a scene before our eyes with sure, deft touches of detail. And the scenes he paints best of all are from memory. He can give us the exact feeling of a day's work in the harvest fields in the Tennessee of 1916, with the chuffing of the steam-tractor, the way the fieldhands moved their bodies and handled their implements, and exactly how the light changed when a storm was coming. As a skilled and experienced writer, in prose or verse, Mr. Warren can write effectively enough on any subject. But what really excites him is memory.

We see this clearly enough if, in reading the present volume, we begin at the end, among the poems salvaged from that early Fugitive period, and then turn back to the beginning, where the most recent poems are. The early verse is, for the most part, merely quaint. It is heavily marked with that affectation which is, for some reason, so hard for the Southern American writer to avoid. Thus, a son muses over his debt to his mother:

A certain weight of cunning flesh devised
So hunger is bred in the bitter bone
To cleave about this precious skeleton
Held mortmain of her womb and merchandised

Unto the dark: a subtile engine, propped
In the sutured head beneath the coronal seam,
Whose illegal prodigality of dream
In shaking the escheat heart is quick estopped.

We see here the affinity with, say, the early John Crowe Ransom, whose exquisitely delicate verse so often hovered on the edge of preciousness; the difference, of course, being that there isn't any Ransom except "early"; he virtually stopped writing poetry in the twenties, where Mr. Warren has gone on, shaken off the old Southern curse of affectation, and developed a pure, economical, descriptive style. A Mediterranean beach: a picnic, gaiety, the sudden appearance of an octopus, his slaughter: the picnic departs: it is all there, conveyed in full, charged language that does not waste a word.

All day there was picnic and laughter,
Bright eye and hair tossing, white foam and thigh-flash,
And up from some cold coign and dark lair of water,
Ectoplasmic, snot-gray, the obscene of the life-wish,
Sad tentacles weaving like prayer, eyes wide to glare-
-horror of day-wash,
The nightmare was spread out on stone. Boys yelled at the knife-flash.

The mountain is black, the sun drops.
Among the black boulders, slow foam laces white.
Wind stirs, stirs paper of the picnic, stops,
And agleam in imperial ease, at sky-height,
One gull hangs white in contempt of our human heart, and the night.
Pearl-slime of the slaughter, on black stone, glints in last night.

That quotation comes from a sequence called "Promises," which gives its title to a volume published in 1956. The sequence of short poems, anything from half-a-dozen to twenty or thirty in number, is Mr. Warren's favorite form; he likes to string his pearls on a thread; and "Promises" is worth looking at closely because it exemplifies most of the strengths and weaknesses of Mr. Warren's mature work. The strength, as I have indicated, lies in powerfully concrete reminiscence and evocation; the weakness generally comes where the poet is trying to sum up, to draw some generalized conclusion, instead of just leaving his picture as a picture.

"Promises" consists of a couple of dozen poems – formally there are 18, but some of them are in two or three parts, complete in themselves. Dedicated to the poet's son, it is an attempt to gather a handful of threads provided by memory and weave them into a rope that will be strong enough to anchor a life. The boy addressed in the poem is, at the time of composition, new-born, and three of the poems, scattered throughout the sequence, are headed "Lullaby" and addressed to the sleeping infant. (They are among the least successful, since they attempt the purely lyrical mode, which is slightly outside Mr. Warren's range as a poet.)

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The others deal with scenes of the poet's boyhood in Tennessee, musings on forebears whose faces stare at him from daguerreotypes, etc., etc. It is as if the father and son were looking together through a photograph album; the old head and the young head come together, pages are turned, a few comments are made, a few questions asked and answered. The father and son are deftly indicated and are palpable presences; the photographs and daguerreotypes are convincingly displayed; the reader is disappointed only in those passages where the poems modulate into generalities.

To put it bluntly, Mr. Warren is very good at showing us what happened, but less good at offering any comment of his own on why it happened and what we should feel about it. Very often, after a description that arouses all one's admiration, he feels impelled to add a trite or fumbling conclusion. Thus, a very effective poem about wandering out in the moonlight and, in the dark wood, coming suddenly upon a dogwood tree blooming whitely amid the darkness, is fine until the last stanza:

> . . . sudden at a path-turn,
> White-floating in darkness, the dogwood, white bloom in dark air
> Like an ice-break, broke joy; then you felt a strange wrath burn
> To strike it, and strike, had a stick been handy in the dark there.
>
> But one wasn't handy, so there in the path then, breath scant,
> You stood, you stood there, and oh, could the poor heart's absurd
> Cry for wisdom, for wisdom ever be answered?
> Triumphant,
> All night, the tree glimmered in darkness, and uttered no word.

The poem ought, surely, to have ended with the sudden strange fit of wrath, the longing to seize a stick and beat the delicate blossoms from the boughs; the frustration and hostility which can seize a man, full of a man's tensions and uncertainties, when he is confronted with the utter calm and self-confidence of the finished product of nature, or of that man-made nature which is art,

> All breathing human passion far above,
> Which leaves a heart high-sorrowful and cloy'd,
> A burning forehead, and a parching tongue.

Mr. Warren's last stanza adds nothing; it is the product of a wish to explain; it is a novelist's poetry.

Here we have the deficiency in power which, when the chips are finally down, puts Mr. Warren below the absolutely highest rank of modern American poets. A major poet would have either the wisdom to draw some genuinely profound conclusion from what he was describing, or the calm assurance to give us the bare scene and add nothing.

At all events, the album is there and the pages are turned; the memories are handed over intact from one generation to another. And, partly no doubt because of the nature of life in the South, the memories are idyllic and terrifying in about equal proportion. The South is beautiful but also cruel and reckless. So, in "Promises," we have a child's terror at his grandfather's memory of stringing up bushwhackers during the Civil War; and, a little later, a dreadful story of a large family of poor children murdered by their father with an icepick. In spite of this willingness to confront violence and evil, it is noteworthy that the photograph album doesn't contain any picture of Negro life; in an early poem, "Pondy Woods," there is a brief description of a Negro hiding in the woods from a lynch-mob, but it peters out as if the poet had lost heart for the story before it was half told; and in a much more recent poem, "Tale of Time," there is a touching description of the death of Mr. Warren's old Negro nurse:

> We would see her who,
> Also, had held me in her arms.
> She had held me in her arms,
> And I had cried out in the wide
> Day-blaze of life. But
>
> Now was a time of endings.

But, in general, the Southern memories, to be packaged and carefully handed on to the generation that will now see the South only as visitors, will never have the red clay on its heels – these memories leave the Negroes out. They are there, and if they happen to be one's old nurse one will visit the cabin in which they lie dying; but beyond that, it seems, the Negroes will have to write their own poetry.

Later on, in "Promises," there is a group of poems which suddenly unleash madness, horror and self-blame into the idyllic woods. An old grandmother strips herself naked and polishes an antique bureau, symbol of the secrets of a respectable family, deep in the woods at night; the narrator has a shocking nightmare of a hog who is trying to deliver a letter: or is it a newborn baby who turns into a hog and tries to deliver a letter? Anyway, this too is very true to Southern life as a foreigner thinks of it; the beautiful landscape filled with twisted and suffering people, the well-being founded on slavery, and, always softly audible in the background, the ballad of the sad café.

Some ten years ago Mr. Warren attended a reunion of Fugitive poets, held at Vanderbilt University, of which the record is in R. R. Purdy's *Fugitives' Reunion* (Nashville, 1959), where the taped conversations are transcribed. At one point, Mr. Warren expressed one of his deepest convictions, and perhaps the main impulse he feels as an artist, in these words:

> "The past is always a rebuke to the present; it's bound to be, one way or the other; it's your great rebuke. It's a better rebuke than any dream of the future. It's a better rebuke because you can see what some of the costs were, what frail virtues were achieved in the past by frail men. . . . The drama of the past that corrects us is the drama of our struggles to be human, or our struggles to define the values of our forebears in the face of their difficulties."

Whatever may be the shortcomings of Mr. Warren's poetry, and I have thought it best to be outspoken about them, we cannot doubt that this book is the record of a serious and courageous attempt, continued over forty years, to confront "the drama of the past that corrects us," and to accept that correction.

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Four Poems

by Robert Graves

Queen Silver and King Gold

Queen Silver and King Gold for untold years
Held planetary sway
Over such common clay
As led its life in eulogy of theirs –

And are still fawned upon even today,
By Voucher, most astute of Ministers
With Town, Court, Bourse and Army in his pay,
Who, if he had his way. . . .

The Near Eclipse

Outshines again the glorious round sun –
After his near-eclipse when pools of light
Thrown on the turf between leaf shadows
Grew crescent-shaped like moons – dizzying us
With paraboles of colour: regal amends
To our own sun mauled barbarously
By the same wide-mouthed dragon.

On Giving

Those who dare give nothing
Are left with less than nothing;
Dear heart, you give me everything,
Which leaves you more than everything –
Though those who dare give nothing
Might judge it left you nothing.

Giving you everything,
I too, who once had nothing,
Am left with more than everything
As gifts for those with nothing
Who need, if not our everything,
At least a loving something.

The Utter Rim of Nowhere

And if that Cerberus, my mind, should be
Flung to earth by the very opiate
That frees my senses for undared adventure,
Waving them wild-eyed past me to explore
Limitless hells of disintegrity –
Jumbled, undifferentiatable fate
Scrolled out beyond the utter rim of nowhere,
Scrolled out . . .
who, on return, fail to surrender
Their memory-trophies: random wisps of horror
Trailed from my shins or tangled in my hair?

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No Longer Refugees

by Lore Segal

We Came As Children is not, as its subtitle claims, a collective autobiography. An accumulation of voices amounts to no self and can portray no life, but Mrs. Gershon's compilation of snippets of facts and feelings is exhaustive, correct and neatly labeled. The reader who does not know the inside story of the emigration of children from Hitler's Europe to England can draw from it his own profile of the experience. For myself the book has fascination: nothing so engages as the retelling of one's own past. Soldiers, I imagine, must look back to battles with this same sense of wonder that it was themselves who lived through such weirdness.

We Came As Children
A Collective Autobiography
Edited by Karen Gershon
(Harcourt, Brace & World; $4.25)

These are the facts as Karen Gershon isolates them:

We were from one to sixteen years old.

We travelled in organized transports; alone; with our families.

We came to live in camps or schools; with refugee relatives; with English foster families, or with our employers.

We learned the language; we refused to learn the language.

We were seduced by the Church of England; we refused to be seduced.

The Jewish ones among us turned against our Jewishness. All turned against our parents and every particle of our history.

We wanted to be English.

We were interned as enemy aliens; we were allowed to join the refugee pioneer corps.

We grew into adults, went to work, married and gave birth to children of a nationality different from our own.

Some of us, at some point, emigrated again and again and again.

Karen Gershon has confined her inquiries to those who remained in England. She asks them how they felt and feel. What are they doing now? Have they visited their native countries? How do they survive the death of their families and how do they stand towards the murderers? Do they think of themselves as English? As refugee? How do they define "home"?

The answers are anonymous little paragraphs.

"What I remember is a dream of a home." . . . "Home is where you belong . . . but if all your family went away I don't think it would be home any more." "Home is where people are nice to one . . . where one can live with a feeling of permanency . . . where you can . . . live a normal life."

The homes to which the arriving children were distributed were rarely less than nice; they were generally temporary and necessarily abnormal.

Those who emigrated with their families saw their parents in the indignity of exile, the mother's and father's roles reversed, poor providers. Any weakness in the affections was cruelly exposed.

"Often, that first winter, we sat in my parents' bed to keep warm. Every week my father queued up at Woburn House for his week's allowance." "[My father] was for a long time denied a labor permit and had to perform menial jobs such as clearing debris from bombed sites . . . quite out of keeping with his training, intelligence and social background." "Only my mother was allowed to work." "My mother was called plain 'Frau' – no name!"

"I had felt in Berlin that all was not well with my parents' marriage. In London [living] at very close quarters, my parents quarrelled constantly."

Some of the children did better in foster homes:

"As a child of ten I was taken into a wonderful foster home. . . . I was terribly happy there. . . . I could hardly remember my parents being as young and carefree and gay as this lovely couple I had come to."

But there was a price to pay for this "terrible happiness" (and it does not matter that the next writer is a different one; the experience was universal): ". . . As my foster mother took over my affections – and I welcomed this – my own mother's visits were an agony

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. . . because of the guilt feelings they aroused in me."

One lost sight of the universal growing away of children from their parents; the reason for this particular defection seemed so palpable:

"My feelings for my parents were a mixture of pity for their disabilities and resentment at the handicaps – social and economic – imposed on me as a result of having refugee parents."

The parents were ineradicably foreign, while the children seemed – we will see later that it proved to be "seemed" – to be learning to pass.

"My foster parents taught me many things in matters of taste . . . and most important, they taught me to become English."

To be English was more important than to be happy and most of the children were not happy. The "wonderful foster home" was as rare as the unkind one. This, I believe, might be more typical:

"Mr. and Mrs. R. were devoutly religious, comfortably off, were kind, sympathetic. . . . It was not their fault that I found their life a little restrictive, a little lonely and lacking in any expression of affection . . . they never made me feel as if I were a burden to them, and seemed to grow fond of me and I certainly of them, though I never quite got over the feeling of being a guest. . . ."

Mrs. Gershon includes an account written by a foster mother that shows in part why refugee children felt less than at home in their new homes. The young woman had become headmistress of an expensive school where she found two refugee sisters. Their wealthy father had been caught, back in Austria. The new headmistress saw "that the staff and girls represented the only family that they [the sisters] could now be said to have got," so she adopted them. This act was a necessity: the school board was preparing to send them to an orphanage. It was magnificent: she took these two foreign girls into her life without any apparent sense of peculiar sacrifice. We are inclined, nowadays, to suspect the Good Samaritan of hidden psychological motivations. I suspect that this woman's act was entirely unselfish. It was also appalling because she did not like the girls. "They were certainly most unattractive children, poor little things," she writes. It is my experienced guess that the new mother provided these daughters with every necessity and every sensible comfort, without a vestige of that warmth by which one heals and grows, and without any peculiar sense, moreover, that something was missing. E. M. Forster has blamed his compatriots for the "uneducated heart."

I have a vision of the gates opened wide to admit English foster mothers into a grey heaven. In its chill, unglamorous light these straight-backed, clear-eyed ladies have the beauty of their unadulterated and limited goodness.

A friend to whom I once told my idea of the English foster mother compared her with a hypothetical Italian foster mother whose vast and loving bosom and wide open arms could accommodate her own and any number of other people's children. But even such a one, I think, would have found the children that we were a difficult, prickly lot.

The children whom the headmistress failed to love were not lovable children: "They were very plain, quarrelled unceasingly. . . . Margaret was determined to become English; she pretended to have forgotten the German language and resolutely refused . . . to help with translating it. . . . She made every conceivable effort to disguise her markedly foreign appearance and . . . soon succeeded in her determination to find a British husband. . . ." Mrs. Gershon gives us a translation out of the diary of the child Inge: "When my parents found fault with me . . . I took it to heart. But when people in a strange country find fault, I immediately think the worst. . . . I feel this isn't said out of love for me but so they won't lay themselves open to criticism." When her adoptive parents called Inge "their child" she wrote: "That is very nice of them, but please . . . don't say it. It hurts me almost as much as if you were to say, 'We hate these children!' We are not your children."

Reality betrays the image our minds make of the little refugee child. Inge records that Mr. Roberts said to her: "I expected to find you nervous. My wife and I were surprised that you weren't." In fact, of course, Inge was almost ill with nervousness, but her symptoms were not those for which the Robertses were looking; they did not recognize the ones they saw.

Those who have had the gentleness to pick up a hurt bird are in for a shock: instead of sitting fluffily still and allowing itself to be comforted, the creature will beat about with its wings and claws at the hand that holds it. It has surprising muscle. It is not cute. It will not look us in the eye, but pecks restlessly about, squawking in an ugly voice. It wants away, as if health and freedom were its birthright, not something in our kindness to bestow.

The refugee children, having had life given back to them, proceeded to look restlessly about for all its benefits as well: warmth, security, consequence, comforts – with a view, later, to the elegancies, even. They squawked.

"When I discovered that I would be allowed to do other work, I left my job as a domestic servant. . . . A fatherly man explained in the kindest possible way that girls of sixteen normally lived at home and could not expect money enough to manage on their own, and why should he pay more to me than to a girl who spoke perfect English? I said that perhaps other girls who applied for such jobs were not my equals in intelligence and upbringing. 'And how old were you when you left school?' I was asked. I burst out crying. . . . I had been thirteen."

If the good fairy had offered these

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Middle European, middle-class, predominantly Jewish children the fulfillment of a single wish, they would unhesitatingly have chosen education and congratulated themselves on having thereby corralled every other treasure. They were primed to learn and they knew how:

"My school report at the end of my first term: ENGLISH. Number in class: 30. Position: First."

Education may seem a virtuous desire in a child, but under these circumstances it was proved to be only another form of selfishness and an obsession. Some of the older children whose education was interrupted have come to feel themselves permanently damaged:

"I feel no bitterness toward the Germans, but I do feel that I have been cheated out of some important things, education mainly." "I could write some sour notes about the difficulties of foreigners albeit naturalized, who are but self-educated, *i.e.*, semi-educated, in obtaining jobs with prospects. . . . Here I am in early middle age in the middle ranks of management with a middling sort of income."

Education they wanted, and, as we see over and over again, integration: that, in our age of the cult of the individual, is the great hunger. "I think to me this was the most important issue of all: to be accepted in a community on equal terms."

Practically all the immigrants of that era are by now naturalized in the legal sense of a term, the original meaning of which the dictionary defines thus: "To introduce into a region and cause to flourish as if native."

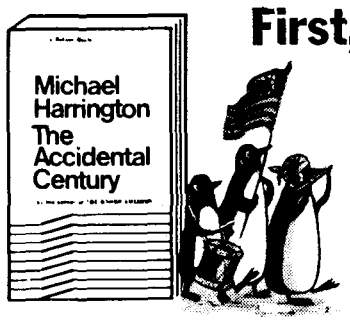
To what extent has this transplanting been successful?

The generation of our grandparents, uprooted in their old age, came – to strain the metaphor – with their native soil clinging to them. They unpacked their old pots and put the doilies under them. When they looked outside it was as though through shattered panes and at distorted things: there was no understanding what anybody said, no trying to cook a meal properly with meat that would forever be butchered wrong.

Our parents, coming in the fullness of their powers, unable to lay down for a single moment the full burden of their responsibilities, muddled despairingly through their first foreign years. By now, many have worked themselves back to their old professions and comforts. They speak English fluently enough, but at their leisure they talk in their native language in some Austrian Center or some Czechoslovak Club, with the inflections, the movements that they used a quarter of a century ago in the old *Kaffeehaeuser*.

But what about those who came as children, who were young enough to have lost every trace of accent? It is interesting to see how much of this naturalization can be accomplished within a single generation. Some protest too much: "Any official form that comes my way today I fill in as follows: Religion, none. Nationality, English. It may not be factually quite accurate but psychologically it is 100 percent true." The introspective ones try to gauge the precise degree and kind of their at-homeness. "I am not aware of being a refugee, only of being an exile." "I don't feel a refugee any longer but I feel that I am without roots." "I am British though I shall never be English." And: "I live a very normal, successful life but I am always oppressed by the past. I don't know any people like me, and therefore find it difficult to make lasting attachments. Being a refugee means . . . that nowhere is home and that I can never really fit in anywhere." One writes regretfully of having visited his home town because he felt "suddenly *there* was my home. . . . I realized that for the first time in twenty-five years, I belonged. . . . *I seemed to be able to understand people.*"

These last italics are mine because this is a sentence that explains something about the permanent nature of exile: Our best friend might be a native of the country of our adoption. We may have come to know all about him – his circumstances, his mind, his neuroses, but let us visit for an hour in the house where he grew up amidst the persons and eloquent objects of his childhood, and there will be such an access of information as if we had formerly known our friend in the flat only, and now with a complexity of



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dimensions such as a lifetime's intimacy cannot convey.

It is this sort of knowledge that fellow countrymen are born having of one another. It is in this sense that the exile does not understand the people among whom he lives, and knows himself not understood.

Then, what about those youngest children who grew up in English homes and who were educated in English schools, those who speak their own language with an English accent and who have the flimsiest memories of that other existence? I think that their Englishness is like some priceless acquisition and that one of the attributes of the treasure is a necessity to announce, alternatively to deny, to every comer the thing's being cracked down the middle; finally, a fake.

The voices in Mrs. Gershon's book by no means suggest that this permanent estrangedness, this sense of vital flaw, need do any drastic damage to the healthy personality. The children grew to maturity under these burdens and embarrassments: Most feel themselves to be living "normally," and a few "successfully":

"My career has gone remarkably smoothly, I am very happily married and seem to almost everyone who knows me an exceptionally fortunate person . . . my constant melancholy may be congenital."

One may certainly conjecture that those who broke under these experiences might have broken under other strains, were, in any case, fragile.

The story of Felicia is one of such a breakdown. In Mrs. Gershon's melange of interviewees I see Inge with her diary as representing the future Intellectual, and Felicia, the Victim. Both coincidentally serve as examples of what is the matter with Mrs. Gershon's conception: if she was afraid that particularity and personality would lose her general application, she was mistaken. It is with the occurrence, in her pages, of this Inge and this Felicia, that the reader wakes to the reality of what she wants him to take in. It is the particular voice of Felicia's adoptive mother that moves. Though she can no more articulate than she could cope with the infinitely unhappy life which broke before her eyes, she continued, and presumably still continues,

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to cope: "She came at the age of two-and-a-half . . . in charge of a sixteen-year-old girl. . . . We went to see her. She had been there for a month, during that time four different people had looked after her. . . . And we felt so sorry for the poor mite that we said we would have her."

Felicia's picture is on the frontispiece. It shows a baby with fat cheeks and small eyes.

"We thought that if her mother was coming we ought not to let her forget, and so we said that if Mummy came, Mummy would take her away – nobody else would take her, only Mummy. . . . We tried to keep her mother in her mind, thinking it was the best thing to do." Later news came of the death of Felicia's family. They told her one night. "And she said, 'All my family? My mother and my father and my brother and my grandmother and my cousins and my aunties – everybody?' And I said, 'Yes, Felicia, I'm afraid so.' She said, 'Oh, now I can stay with you'." She was then nine years old. Felicia did well until she was fifteen, then began to fail in school. "The girls told us afterwards that she used to hide in cupboards and corners and cry. She kept saying, 'They didn't like me . . . I was too dirty for them'."

Felicia is in and out of institutions. "Somebody said to me the other day, 'I don't know how you can do it,' and I said, 'Well, I don't know how I couldn't. We can't let her down.' . . . We now think it was a pity we adopted her. Because she would have remained under the care of the Refugee Committee. . . . Who is going to look after her when we are dead? Felicia is no longer a refugee."

It is here, this particular, extreme, atypical instance which symbolizes the element of limbo in the lives of those who came as children. They have lost even the community that is held together by lack of community. They are no longer refugees.

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The Devil's Prayerbook

by Martin Esslin

This is an important publication, not only because of the English translations printed on the right-hand pages, but also because of the original German text on the left. For, paradoxical though it may sound, this American edition of Brecht's first and most important collection of poems published in his lifetime is the only one now freely available which reproduces the text in the form it was contained in the first edition of *Hauspostille*. *Hauspostille* appeared in 1927 with some slight modifications, notably the omission of one poem, which has now been restored in the Bentley version. In the early fifties, after Brecht's return to Europe from exile in the United States, a cheap reprint was issued in West Germany. But this omitted another poem, "The Hymn of the Red Army Soldier," which Brecht had decided to suppress after his conversion to the Communist cause. In the first volume of the collected edition of Brecht's Poems, published after Brecht's death, in 1960, *Hauspostille* appears in an even more different form, the editors having followed notes and verbal instructions of Brecht's for a complete recasting of the collection. The first edition has become very rare – and expensive on the secondhand book market. And so Eric Bentley's edition is the first and only reprint now generally accessible.

Manual of Piety (Die Hauspostille)
by Bertolt Brecht
English text by Eric Bentley
notes by Hugo Schmidt
(Grove; $10)

A great writer like Brecht must, and can only, be understood and appreciated in the correct historical context. That is why it is essential to be able to see a work like *Hauspostille* in its original form – as a deliberately blasphemous work, a parody on a devotional tract or hymnal (this edition's blank cloth cover with a cross on the front captures the spirit of the original intention to perfection) and at the same time an expression of anarchic nihilism, an acceptance of the world in all its horror and beauty and a rejection of all political cant (that is why "The Hymn of the Red Army Soldier" is needed to complete the picture of Brecht before he accepted the Marxist orthodoxy –

In those years Freedom was a word
That often fell from lips of ice
And some had tigers' fangs that followed
After the red, inhuman flag.)

There is a freshness, a youthful cynicism in all this that so obviously covers a tender, innocent, sensitiveness, which not only explains a great deal of the later Brecht, with his oscillation between dedicated self-discipline within the party and biting derision for the folly of its Byzantine self-deceptions, but must be regarded as a triumphant achievement in its own right. For this is a seminal book: an attempt to get lyrical poetry away from the self-consciously arty musings of middle-class intellectuals and to bring it back into the marketplace and the backyards. Brecht wanted to bridge the ever-widening gulf between the artist and the ordinary man in the street. And here we have great poetry in the form of the pop-song, the street ballad, the revivalist hymn – in however brutally parodied a form. It is the impulse behind a book like *Hauspostille* which has ultimately led to the current vogue of folksingers and protest singers. The vagabond poets Villon and Rimbaud were Brecht's heroes. They too had rejected society, suffered hardship and humiliation, and yet said yes to the world:

From this earth whereon the winds are wild
You depart with scurf and scab defiled.
Almost all have called the world their friend
Before they get their handful of earth in the end.

Cynical and antisocial the *poète maudit* may be, yet he feels pity for those fellow human beings who are denied the gift that he possesses, the power

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of speech to express his defiance of the world. Hence the ballads about the dumb victims of society, the child Apfelboeck who murdered his parents without knowing why he did it, the infanticide Marie Farrar who gave birth she knew not why and killed her own child in a fit of dumb despair –

You who give birth in snow-white sheets
All you who call your pregnant bellies blest
Do not condemn the outcast and the weak.
For if their sin was grave, great was their grief.
Therefore, I beg, do not give way to indignation.
Each creature needs the help of all creation.

There is deep pity as well as the blackest of black humor in "The Legend of the Dead Soldier," who was dug out of his hero's grave and pronounced medically fit again, because the Kaiser needed more soldiers, and dragged back into the fray. And if, in the Memory of Marie A. (one of the more personal poems in the collection, and the one I personally like best) the poet's stance is one of a rejection of romantic love –

And since that moment, many a September
Came sailing in, then floated down the stream.
No doubt the plum trees were cut down for timber
And if you ask what happened to my dream
I shall reply: I cannot now remember
Though what you have in mind I surely know.
And yet her face: I really don't recall it.
I just recall I kissed it long ago –

yet, ultimately, there is more real tenderness here than in dozens of volumes of romantic insistence on the beloved's uniqueness and unforgettability. I have quoted from Eric Bentley's translations to give a flavor of their quality, to show that they are poetry in their own right which can stand by itself, without any parallel text. Clearly in a collection of 77 poems of greatly differing degrees of complexity of rhyme, metre, parodistic treatment of originals unknown to English-speaking readers and full of idiomatic expressions, puns and double entendres, one cannot expect a uniform level of success. But on the whole Eric Bentley's daring enterprise has been successful. His versions are accurate and give a very good idea indeed even of the most intractable originals. The possibility to refer to the German text will allow each reader to judge for himself how accurate the translations are. Dr. Schmidt's copious and entertaining notes are a source of further illumination. And the tunes for sixteen of the songs, a good many of them Brecht's own compositions, are also provided.

If, as it now appears more and more likely, Brecht is going to achieve the status of an international classic, this edition is destined to become an essential part of the Brecht canon in English.

With this collection of provocative essays, Irving Howe, teacher, editor, author, and critic scrutinizes some of the dilemmas of our time. The experiences examined range from the McCarthy years through the crisis in Vietnam and include portraits of Trotsky, Pasternak, Stevenson, Kennedy and Johnson. The result is a brilliant and challenging book which clarifies the radical position.

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"Tongues, Like Governments"

by J. M. Edelstein

"... Tongues, like governments, have a natural tendency to degeneration . . ." said Samuel Johnson in the preface to his *A Dictionary of the English Language* (London, 1755). Johnson's dictionary was an unsuccessful attempt to check the tendency. The *Random House Dictionary of the English Language* is the latest event in the long history of the corruption of the language and a victory for the linguists who believe that they need only to record and not to discriminate. No one who is lucky enough to own a copy of *Webster's Second Unabridged* will want to get rid of it for either the new *Random House Dictionary* or the *Webster's Third New International Unabridged Dictionary* which came out in 1961.

The Random House Dictionary of the English Language
The Unabridged Edition
Edited by Jess Stein et al.
(Random House; $25)

Modern American Usage
by Wilson Follett
edited and completed by
Jacques Barzun et al.
(Hill & Wang; $7.50)

The Random House Dictionary has some commendable qualities and features: it is relatively cheap as unabridged dictionaries go ($25.00 compared to $47.50 and up, depending on the binding, for the *Webster's Third*); it is legible, adequately illustrated, thumb-indexed, and on good paper. It is more than a dictionary ("a book containing a selection of the words of a language . . ." – *Random House Dictionary*) for it contains a large amount of colorful and peripheral material such as a directory of colleges and universities, concise foreign language dictionaries (French, Spanish, German and

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Italian), a basic style manual, lists of major reference works, of important dates in history, of the Presidents *and* the Vice Presidents of the United States, and lists of national parks, oceans, seas, principal lakes, noted waterfalls, major rivers, islands, deserts, volcanoes, and major mountain peaks. It reprints the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution and the Charter of the United Nations; it provides coastline measurements and air distances; and, finally, there is an elaborate world atlas. In all, 394 pages are given over to its encyclopedic supplement and the atlas – almost one-fifth of the entire volume of 2,059 pages.

The lexicon proper continues the downward trend toward anarchy in language and usage which was given such a vigorous and discouraging push by the publication of *Webster's Third* five years ago. The philosophy of Mr. Jess Stein, editor in chief, and his staff of more than 350 people who labored for seven years with the help of four computers and about $3,000,000 to produce the *Random House Dictionary* is a permissive one. It is a philosophy of language which supports not the precise and the exact, but the vague and the ambiguous. It confuses "standard" with standards, and it ignores tradition and authority. At its worst, the result of such a philosophy is its contribution to the degeneration of the language. At its best, the result is mediocrity.

We are surrounded and bombarded today by officialese and jargon, by pretentiously wordy phrasing, by advertising and show-business lingo, by what is chic and fashionable, by the prose of publishers' blurbs. The *Random House Dictionary* blesses them all. It perpetuates the popular delusion that what is clear, effective, powerful, distinctive, or beautiful is not only outmoded, but is also snobbish and undemocratic. In his preface, Mr. Stein says: "In man's language is to be found the true mirror of man himself. His lexicon is an index to his ideas and passions, his inventions and achievements, his history and hopes." If these assertions are valid, and I believe that they are, then *The Random House Dictionary* reflects a sad state of affairs. Its language is an expression of the pseudo egalitarianism of our times. Its norm is the lowest common denominator. Its appeal is to the broadest possible market.

If the Random House lexicographers are abdicating their responsibility to the language and are allowing it to degenerate, not so with the group headed by Jacques Barzun who brought to completion Wilson Follett's *Modern American Usage*. This book tries to do for the American language what H. W. Fowler's *A Dictionary of Modern English Usage* did for the English language, and to a large extent it has succeeded. It is invaluable for anyone interested in educated usage and good taste. Filled with wit, erudition and good sense, it can be read for pleasure as well as consulted for clarification.

As important as *Modern American Usage* is and will be simply as a guide and a reference book, it is more so for its eloquent and outspoken presentation of the case against the permissive view of language represented by the *Random House Dictionary*. The editors begin their preface with these words:

> "Within the profession of linguist there are of course warring factions, but on this conception of language as a natural growth with which it is criminal to tamper they are at one. In their arguments one finds appeals to democratic feelings of social equality (all words and forms are equally good) and individual freedom (a man may do what he likes with his own speech). These assumptions further suggest that the desire for correctness, the very idea of better or worse in speech, is a hangover from aristocratic and oppressive times. To the linguists change is the only ruler to be obeyed. They equate it with life and accuse their critics of being clock-reversers, enemies of freedom, menaces to 'life.'

Somewhat inconsistently, the linguists produce dictionaries in which they tell us that a word or an expression is standard, substandard, colloquial, archaic, slang, or vulgar. How do they know? They know by listening to the words people use and by noticing – in conversations, newspapers, and books – how and by whom these words are used. Usage, then, is still real and various, even though the authorities refuse

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to point openly to a set of words and forms as being preferable to others. 'Standard' gets around the difficulty of saying 'best' or 'correct'."

They end, most commendably, this way:

"It is a duty to maintain the continuity of speech that makes the thought of our ancestors easily understood, to conquer Babel every day against the illiterate and the heedless, and to resist the pernicious and lulling dogma that in language – contrary to what obtains in all other human affairs – whatever is is right and doing nothing is for the best."

Making the Constitution

by Gerald W. Johnson

It was a near thing. They knew it so well in 1787 that men as little given to extravagant language as George Washington and James Madison both used the word "miracle" in describing the event; and that, Catherine Drinker Bowen offers as her justification for using the same word in 1966.

Miracle at Philadelphia
The Story of the Constitutional Convention
by Catherine Drinker Bowen
(Atlantic-Little Brown; $7.50)

She makes her point, too. Hers is easily the most vivid of the many descriptions of the Constitutional Convention now available which does not necessarily mean that it is the best. Bowen is essentially a biographer, specifically a biographer of lawyers, as witness her immensely successful lives of Holmes, Bacon and Coke, and what she offers here may fairly be described as the biography of an event. Since the event involved the creation of organic law, the studies incident to her earlier work have qualified her to deal with it lucidly.

However, she is a biographer, not a law clerk, and her respect for the "nice, sharp quillets of the law" may leave something to be desired. Biography, *pace* Thomas Carlyle, is not the only true history. This story has convolutions that the book blithely ignores, no doubt to the annoyance of careful, if tedious, annalists. For instance, the transmutation of Locke's "property" into Jefferson's "pursuit of happiness" it treats sketchily and the idea involved in "general welfare" it hardly touches. Again it may be plausibly argued that she missed the greater miracle entirely, for it was worked, not in the Convention, but in the campaign for ratification of the Convention's product.

Yet here is one reader ready to dismiss all this criticism as pettifogging. The book does, indeed, have a serious error of omission, but it is not its cavalier treatment of minor detail. It is its failure to emphasize the truth that the Convention of 1787 was the other half of the Revolution of 1776. It is a curious fact that Hannah Arendt, European-born and educated in Vienna, is the first philosopher to note that the real singularity of the American revolution is the fact that it, alone, among the three great upheavals of modern times was completed by the men who began it. The revolutionary cycle has made only a half-turn with the overthrow of the existing government; the other half is its replacement with a regime at least as stable as the one subverted. Six of the men who signed the Declaration throwing down the old government, also signed the Constitution setting up the new one; and most of the others had been either soldiers in Washington's army, or civilian officers of the revolutionary regime. Even the few up-and-coming youngsters, such as Madison and Gouverneur Morris were thoroughly identified with the old subversives.

We had no Danton, no Kerensky. Our Revolution did not "devour its children" or swerve from its original aim. Europeans, including as modern and as acute an observer as Camus, have drawn from that the curious inference that ours was an aborted revolution, instead of the only one that was not aborted. If Bowen had applied her remarkable talent for lucid presentation of this idea, her book might have been a contribution to historiography surpassing all that she has done for biography.

As it is, she has excelled in conveying the tension and anxiety pervading the Constitutional Convention. Those men of the 18th century were appalled by the thought that they had attempted what had never been achieved in human history. They had done their best, but they were more than half persuaded that their best was not good enough and they emerged from the last sitting despondent, rather than jubilant. Weeks were to pass before they began to cherish a small hope that they had really worked a miracle.

Bowen makes this not merely credible, but perfectly natural, indeed, inevitable. Since we know, 179 years later, that the miracle in fact was worked, the book is an antidote for despair in the face of our current perplexities. On the other hand, when we consider that 55 of the best minds in America, working behind closed doors completely free of interference, yet crossed over ruin as precariously as Blondin crossed Niagara on a tightrope, we, too, may well be appalled. So the non-scholarly reader is likely to turn the last page in a curious state of mind, a weird combination of glow and gooseflesh.

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God and His Men

by William Robert Miller

Everyone but the starchiest traditionalist today would agree with Bishop J. A. T. Robinson's statement, "Our image of God must go." From this statement and its development in *Honest to God* have sprung a cluster of debates, most recently dramatized last month by a four-day conference on radical theology at the University of Michigan. Although set in motion by exponents of a "godless" Christianity, the papers and discussions at Ann Arbor testified more to a temper than to a point of view. The one thing that most participants could agree on was the insufficiency of that "old-time religion," including liberalism and neo-orthodoxy.

No Other God
by Gabriel Vahanian
(George Braziller; cloth, $5; paper, $1.50)

Understanding God
by Frederick Herzog
(Scribner; $4.50)

Secular Christianity
by Ronald Gregor Smith
(Harper & Row; $5)

You Shall Be As Gods
by Erich Fromm
(Holt, Rinehart & Winston; $4.95)

What comes next? Or rather what characterizes the valid religious or post-religious temper of our time? Thomas J. J. Altizer opts for "Christian atheism," insisting that you have to be a Christian to experience the death of God. William Hamilton's problem is "how to make it as a Christian" when God is dead. Newer voices, such as that of Maynard Kaufman, insist that Christianity is finished, and something yet unspecified will rise from its ashes. The conference's leading Jewish spokesman, Richard Rubenstein, offered a vision of God from Jewish mysticism as "the holy Nothingness," clinching his option with the mute witness of Hitler's death camps. Columbia University chaplain Henry Malcolm had less to say about God than about man, with particular reference to Freud and Marshall McLuhan. Other names much heard were Herbert Marcuse and Norman O. Brown, bearing reverberations of Hegel, Nietzsche, Marx and Freud. There was little inclination to want to recover any of the ground from, say, Augustine to Luther. If there is to be a theology for our age, it must be at least post-Hegelian, if not steeped in the latest word from McLuhan. If, as McLuhan says, "the medium is the message," the basic issue may be really that our image of *man* has changed radically and will no longer support the God of our pre-electronic fathers.

What becomes of the Bible and of theology in such an age? The radicals show no lack of seriousness about the Bible, but their approach draws out themes and motifs that speak to modern man rather than attempting a massive, overall reinterpretation full of ancient controversies.

Something of this spirit moves among the new books under review here, each of which is in some sense cued to the Death-of-God concept. It was Gabriel Vahanian's book, five years ago, titled *The Death of God,* which paved the way for the advent of radical theology. But as Vahanian makes clear in *No Other God,* he would have been somewhat out of place at Ann Arbor. The viewpoint which he asserts is a strongly Calvinist one, sometimes explicitly so; and he rejects virtually every theological viewpoint from Schleiermacher to the present, except Kierkegaard and Karl Barth. The "death" of God is for Vahanian a "cultural phenomenon" – what he really means is that modern man has lost contact with the transcendent biblical God and will have a hard time restoring this contact because the demise of our "Christian" culture has inoculated him against Christianity. Meaning, he says, is a function of language: it is the "word of man" which makes tangible the Word of God which defines reality.

It is in Calvin's *Institutes* that Vahan-

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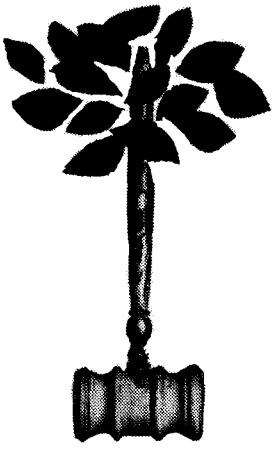

THE POLITICS OF CONSERVATION

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ian purports to find guidelines for present-day theology, and from each of the *Institutes'* four books he extracts a specific point. The four together form "the key with which to unlock the cipher of our post-Christian culture." To summarize: 1) Knowledge is theonomous – the question of man implies the question of God; 2) theology is Christological – "there is no other God than he who is accessible through Christ alone"; 3) theology is pneumatic – it is inspired by the Word of God, not derived from philosophy; 4) theology is ecclesiastical – it is a function of the church in the world, not determined by the world but taking account of it. These conclusions are not new in this book, nor are Vahanian's other emphases, such as "iconoclasm" and "desacralization." To a large extent, *No Other God* simply recapitulates the substance of *The Death of God* and *Wait Without Idols*. For all of Vahanian's familiarity with Camus, Beckett, Heidegger and Sartre, his basic commitment centers in the past. His heart may be in the right place, but his mind finds earlier centuries more congenial. In the end, he is not addressing modern man but the church, warning it against both accommodation to modern thought and against too specific reliance on the language of the creeds. He is less concerned with the destiny of man than with remaining a Christian in the face of such rivals as atheistic humanism.

A considerably more useful book is Frederick Herzog's *Understanding God*. Although it is no easier reading than Vahanian's convoluted prose, if you can learn to digest such frequent expressions as "historico-ontological hermeneutic," it offers a fairly comprehensive and discerning survey of the various ways of thinking about God that are new in Protestant theology – the "nonreligious" God of Tillich and Robinson, the historically revealed God of Helmut Gollwitzer, Paul van Buren's God of the "linguistic blik," the various interpretations of Hamilton, Altizer, John B. Cobb, Schubert Ogden, William Hordern, Wolfhart Pannenberg and Gerhard Ebeling. Herzog provides a running critique of these writers, giving the reader not so much his own opinion as a picture of the debate itself – how Gollwitzer challenges Bishop Robinson and Herbert Braun, for example. Some of these figures reappear in the chapter on the new quest of the historical Jesus and another on the hermeneutic of the Fourth Gospel.

These discussions are preparatory to a confrontation of what for Herzog is the central question: Man's quest for a primordially meaningful word evolves as part of the debate with his environment whereby he develops his self-understanding. Love, in the sense that God is love, emerges as a dimly glimpsed ontological possibility. What, then, is the significance of Jesus? Herzog's answer is that "all of Jesus' words are rooted in the primordial Word," and that "in the primordial Word, God is present as he was present in Jesus." Jesus' death on the cross is God's consummate word to man, the actual and "historical" manifestation of love. Not just love, but that costly love which, quoting the late Robert W. Spike, he identifies with "Christlike action." In contrast to many of today's Protestant thinkers, Herzog goes on to link the interpretation of God directly to a brief consideration of ethics. The "Wordpresence" of God in Jesus' words and deeds is a warrant for distinctively Christian service to others (*diakonia*) and for nonviolent direct action. He refers in passing to the new morality also, but does not develop the point.

Coming finally to "the present-day task of systematic theology," Herzog subjects the theologies of Altizer, Carl Michalson and Wolf-Dieter Marsch to a brief but probing analysis. One concludes with the feeling that, for all its cogency, Herzog's case for God is unconvincing, too dependent on the rules of the game as established by the theological club. According to these rules, Altizer is simply off base for carrying the idea of the incarnation beyond its New Testament limits. Whether Altizer's own rules might be valid on their own terms is a question that would take Herzog out of his chosen territory.

An approach that somewhat parallels Herzog's is that of Ronald Gregor Smith in *Secular Christianity*. Developing themes presented a decade ago in his book *The New Man* (one of the most important precursors of *Honest to God*), Smith sees faith as "historical existence." "The problem of history," he says, "is that of the presentness of the past." The reality of God is inaccessible to proof or argument. It is a matter of faith, but not for that reason merely blind or subjective. The "God hypothesis," for Smith, has no validity as a means of understanding nature, but it is crucial for the interpretation of history. Indeed, in an important sense there is no history without interpretation, only an assortment of occurrences. The life and death of Jesus, seen as God's decisive act in history, comprise an "eschatological event" of such finality that it defines the terms on which historical existence is possible and meaningful, in the ongoing dialectic between present and future. It is the way in which men in the present have access to "God's loving, forgiving renewal."

Smith packs an extraordinary amount of learning into relatively few pages, does so with jargonless lucidity and almost colloquial ease, and introduces you to a good deal of relevant material hitherto unavailable in English. In ad-

This was our June cover. You should have seen October's.

Ptome-maine Poisoning?

By Jerome Agel

While reviewers are praising for the umpteenth time the diary of a Swiss private and the history of glass design, we're reporting what's happening, what's really happening, baby. Like "The Boys of Boise," Idaho's homosexual scandals; For Hotch the Belle Tolls; The real message of "MacBird": "Don't jump on the RFK bandwagon"; Pamela Tiffin's College of One; New Journalists Replacing Old Novelists; LSD and the turned-on grandmother; "Ho Chi Minh's Daughter"; Capote pays up his Tynan bet. Our name is BOOKS, the lively monthly for the very lively reader. Every issue is an unpredictable experience. Says Newsweek: "BOOKS has a talent for first-rate scoops." Broadway-London playwright: "Every issue is like a great night in the theater." Captain of industry: "Gives me ideas." Princeton prof: "BOOKS is fantastically imaginative, entertaining. Put me down for two more gift subscriptions." Manhattan femme fatale: "Reading BOOKS is like living with someone you love. You're beautiful." Our widely quoted, exclusive Cocktail Party column makes news: Jeane Dixon, the seer, told us: "Governor Wallace would make a good President." Marshall McLuhan said: "Art is anything you can get away with." News, seminal ideas, layouts available nowhere else. Plus plus plus. Scoop scoop scoop. There is something new under the fun sun: Us—BOOKS. See for yourself.

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dition to extracts from Hegel and Jean Paul on the death of God, he presents the essence of Friedrich Gogarten's interpretation of "secularizing as a theological problem." With Gogarten, he asserts that historical Christian faith liberates man from bondage to the world. Through Christ, man is not taken out of the world but is made responsible for it. Secularism as such is a post-Christian phenomenon: without the "de-divinization" of the world which Christian faith engendered, man would not have attained the freedom and autonomy which secularism implies. What then? All things become possible, including meaninglessness and nihilism, which are misuses of secularism. The alternative is a secular Christian faith, an eschatological commitment to the world, and it is this that Smith propounds in contrast to "religion," which is the attempt to *use* God as a completion to man's life. Such a secular Christianity "cannot be expressed either in terms of the simple presence or the simple absence of God. But secular Christianity means the dialectical expression of the presence of the Spirit, which is the way of Christ in the world, in forms which can be neither objectively distinguished nor enumerated."

Such a conclusion leaves many questions unanswered, and still others unasked. Fascinating and informative though it is, it is too much a *tour de force* for the Christian believer seeking to update and upgrade his faith. It is a brilliant and unencumbered restatement of neo-orthodox Christology, and that is no small achievement. In the end, however, Smith has used up his space on the perennial issues of theology and stopped short of the actual world of the 1960's.

So far we have seen three Christians defending their faith. Erich Fromm in *You Shall Be As Gods* begins by saying that he is not a theist, and proceeds to give us a humanistic interpretation of the Old Testament steeped in Talmudic and other commentary. Like Smith, Herzog and possibly Vahanian, Fromm asserts that the biblical God has to do with historical existence. But man's liberation, the desacralization and secularization of the world do not occur in the pivotal event of Jesus; they evolve out of the

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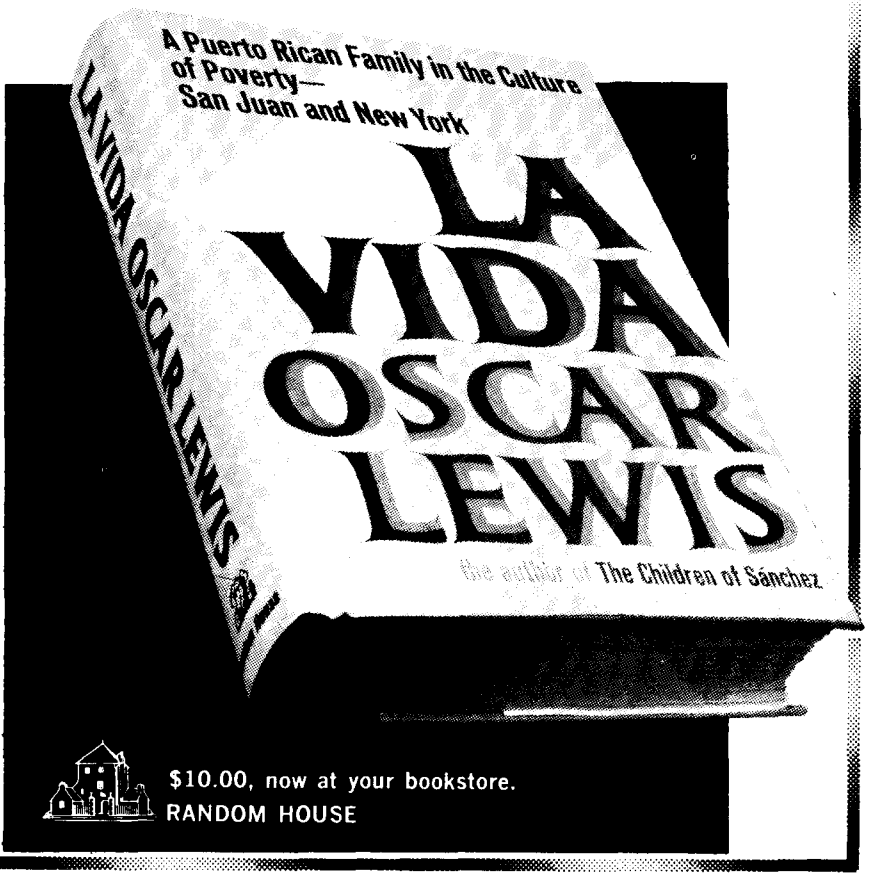
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historic experience of the Jewish people. From the creation through the successive covenants with Noah, Abraham and Moses, God changes from an absolute to a "constitutional" monarch – from the mirror image, magnified, of the Hebrew tribal chief to the nameless and imageless personification of *halakhah*, the Way. Man's obedience to this transcendent God of history represents a step out of bondage to nature and other men. Fearing only God, man need not fear the elements nor any human tyranny. In this sense, "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." But for Fromm it is only a beginning. His chapter on the Hebrews' struggle against Pharaoh is rich in the kind of psychological insight that made *Escape From Freedom* his most durable book. For Fromm, the concept of God is a means of man's self-understanding. Obedience to the authority of a transcendent God is part of a process that enables man "to acquire convictions and principles, and thus to be eventually 'true to himself'." God does not interfere in history to change man's nature; he points the way, offers choices, instructs man in the consequences of his actions.

Of particular interest to Christians and post-Christians is Fromm's discussion of the "messianic time," the fulfillment of man's maturity and restoration of the primal unity of man and nature. One thinks of Teilhard de Chardin's "omega point" here, not to mention Marshall McLuhan's vision of an emergent post-literate culture. Belief in God is not the issue, and, properly speaking, Fromm does not set himself up as a theologian. The issue is life, not as a biological fact but as a process of growth, development, response. The goal is not so much a fixed destination as it is an indicator of direction.

Is God dead? Fromm sets beside it another question: Is Aristotle dead? It is not the concept but the experimental reality that matters. Just as we live in the world of Freud and Marx rather than of Aristotle, we also live in a world of republics where the idea of a divine monarch, even a constitutional one, is an insipid metaphor. Nevertheless, *You Shall Be As Gods* speaks volubly to the condition of man. It is a very cool book for a cool world, suggesting that the humanist's *halakhah* is, quite without special pleading, a radically contemporary continuation of the path charted by the Old Testament prophets. It is also a cogent reminder that the Jewish legacy, so long caricatured in Christian theology, has plenty to say that challenges Christianity's pretensions. Fromm's is obviously not the only possible answer, but it is worth considering. Even if it proves to be no answer at all, *You Shall Be As Gods* makes absorbing reading, studded as it is with rabbinic aphorisms, hasidic anecdotes and other gems of Jewish insight.

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Three for the Cult

by Gerald Weales

It is the ambition of a suburban lady I know to own a complete Gorey library, every book that he has illustrated from the comic-decadent melodramas that he writes himself to the most innocuous children's book. She opens this review not because she is *sui generis*, but because she is legion. There is a Gorey cult. An initiate, recognizing another true-believer, begins to cite book and picture the way bona fide Marxists toss Groucho's lines back and forth. Faced with three new Gorey books and the knowledge that "they" are out there ready to be delighted, I hesitate to confess that Gorey bores me.

The Gilded Bat
by Edward Gorey
(Simon & Schuster; $3)

The Monster Den
by John Ciardi
Drawings by Edward Gorey
(Lippincott; $2.95)

The Adventures of Gremlin
by DuPre Jones
Drawings by Edward Gorey
(Lippincott; $3.95)

Introduced to a new Gorey drawing, I am always convinced that I have seen it before. There are exceptions – the wonderful confrontation between the hero and the unmasked Doubt in Frank Jacobs' *Alvin Steadfast on Vernacular Island*. Everything comes to a point in Gorey, as though his figures were trying to pull themselves into a single line. You see it first in the feet – always long, slender, pointed; then you realize that it is not just the toes, but the fingers, the noses, the hems of dresses, the edges of hats, the flowers, the animals, the furniture. When a Gorey illustration violates the attenuation principle (the first rule of the Mary-Petty-analogue school) there is likely to be brief unrest in the viewer. Take the scene in *The Adventures of Gremlin* in which the bear who persists in eating Zeppelin (Gremlin's foster brother) leans over the bushes in which the little girl is hiding. Such a round bear. Such a rounded top to the illustration. Then our eyes drop down, past the pointed ears, the pointed leaves to Gremlin stretched out on the ground, and although she is huddled in fear, stretch is what the lines make her do and it is familiar Gorey ground.

There is a similarity of tone, too, and it is that, I assume, that gives most pleasure to Gorey lovers. His work gives off an emanation of horror, a suggestion of the unnatural, a whiff of rot. This is not to be taken seriously, of course, but the *frisson* is supposed to be there, just under the laugh. He gets it, in his own books, by playing at and with *fin de siècle* decadence, and by heightening the effects with dark backgrounds – black, gray, figured – which let his characters go their peculiar ways in a bath of murkiness.

Gorey has always been more interesting as an illustrator of other people's work, but the Gorey tone, muted, is still there. In the books of other men, he moves the characters onto white

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backgrounds. Since they are the same figures with the same non-faces and since they are usually dressed in turn-of-the-century clothes, some spookiness carries over. The appeal of the Gorey-illustrated children's books, at least to adults, is presumably this implicit nastiness, but it is largely brought to the books by the knowledgeable Gorey reader. When touches of it turn up legitimately in one of the juveniles, as in *The Monster Den* in which the depiction of the naughty children as malevolent suits the John Ciardi text, it can be amusing. When it is dragged in meaninglessly, as in the spot drawing of what I take to be a demented iguana on the last page of *Den*, it is annoying. Of course, Gorey is crazy about lizards and insects and bats, things that go murk in the night, and he likes to push them in wherever he can. In *The Adventures of Gremlin*, there is a scarey "thing," real or imaginary, dead or alive, in almost every picture, even if it is only an insect hovering at the edge of an inn sign. These creatures do not do much for the humor of the book, but they provide a game of "find-the-whatzis" – a game that Gorey likes if the worm that comes crawling into every illustration in Frank Jacobs' *Alvin Steadfast on Vernacular Island* is an example.

Gorey's characters, even more than his style and tone (although the characters are reflections of both), are responsible for the sense of *déjà vu* each new book brings. Miss Myra in *The Monster Den* is also Gremlin in the book that bears her name, and also Maudie Splaytoe (how's that for a gag?) in *The Gilded Bat*. This leading lady, child or adult, has the familiar blonde hair hanging limply down her back (ending in a point, of course) and the only Gorey profile, the single stroke from hair-line to nose-tip which does away with the forehead altogether. The male juvenile is the female character with shorter hair (not even that with the poet in *Gremlin*). There is the older man, moustached, suitable for fathers and knights, and two older women, a mother, ever so slightly rounder than the other figures, and a *femme fatale* who can play a ballet mistress (*Bat*) or an outré fairy godmother (*Gremlin*). For the Gorey fancier, this sameness is probably a virtue, for each new book is a chance to see old friends doing new things. Actually, Gorey's characters do very little. They stand around a great deal, they lift their arms or jump a little or even float, but the drawings are essentially static, not so much illustrating the action of the book as punctuating it. But then the books Gorey illustrates are likely to be ruminative (Ciardi) or comic (Jones) comments on action and not dramatic presentations of it. The exception, the book with the best Gorey illustrations, is *Alvin Steadfast* and in that book, Jacobs' description leads Gorey to action and, for that matter, to creatures who are more than Gorey repeats.

Of the new books, *The Gilded Bat* and *The Monster Den* will be most familiar to Gorey enthusiasts who are used to his working alone or in tandem with John Ciardi. The *Bat*, ostensibly about a ballerina (toe shoes being the logical extension of the Gorey pointed feet), is really about wings. We first see Maudie looking at a dead bird; her debut is in *Bain d'Oiseaux;* her first solo is as an angry butterfly; she takes over the lead in *Oiseau de Glace;* she plays *Le Corbeau; Le Chauve-Souris Dorée* is created for her; she is killed when a bird flies into the propeller of the plane she is in; her costume – the bat wings – are suspended as a tribute on the last page of the book. There is a tiny joke about classical ballet buried in all this, but it is hardly worth digging up. The Ciardi volume is another collection of his poems about children, as message-y in their way as Munro Leaf's Watchbird, with the usual Ciardi twist – this one the decision of the parents to run away when they hear that their run-away children are coming home. Gorey's contribution, as I suggested earlier, is often effective, but when he turns the children into real monsters, as he does in some of the illustrations, the results are surprisingly benign; his monsters would never be allowed on that island of Maurice Sendak's *Where the Wild Things Are.*

DuPre Jones' story is a fairy tale about the woodcutter's daughter who is really a princess, and with knights, villains, a fairy godmother. It is a vehicle for some lightly satirical comment on contemporary society, some funny limericks, a great many excessively cute jokes and a host of shiveringly awful puns. It is presumably for adults, but I suspect its potential readers are the

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literate members of the *Get Smart* audience. Gorey gets into the spirit of the book and provides his own running gag, a sweatshirt for Zeppelin which has a different name – Heraclitus, Lao Tsu, Trelawney – on it in each picture; the topper finds Zeppelin, as a priest, in a monk's robe with "Surtees" and the same old head on the front. May I say, before the cultists muddy the issue, that the best Gorey touch is in the scene in the Saracen's cave in which he lets Gremlin's jam-and-salmon sandwich drip.

Poeme d'Extase

by Larry L. King

Do you remember when you had acne and a changing voice, and how your palms would sweat on your Buttercup as you sat there in some darkened theatre, all pop-eyed and breathing like a dray horse, while Clark Gable rained kisses on Carol Lombard or Baby told Bogie that if he wanted anything all he had to do was pucker up and blow? Or the terrible dryness that visited your throat while Hedy Lamarr – perhaps cloaked in scant raiment as the savage beauty Tondelayo of *White Cargo* – undulated her charms in a most disturbing way? And how, later on, you might have a tough time keeping your mind on your upcoming Tenderfoot Scout tests because all these very unscoutly fantasies kept swimming before your eyes: you and Carole Lombard, you and Baby, you and the savage Tondelayo: all hair and heat and hands. . . .

Ecstasy and Me
by Hedy Lamarr
(Bartholomew House; $5.95)

Well, this is America where the shineboy has The Dream and it is the Land of Opportunity where office boys rise to be Board Chairmen and the tired poor huddled masses yearning to breathe free can jump off the boat and make a quick killing in kumquats, funeral wreaths, or hoola hoops. So why *not* you and Hedy Lamarr? "Why not, indeed?" Miss Lamarr seems to ask in her maiden literary romp.

Ole Tondelayo does not go four paragraphs before she hikes her literary skirts to give us a long look at her libido. Before she gets off the invocational page she has shared confidences about several old flames including "a whip brandishing sadist," a fellow "with a classic case history of impotence," and a gent "who took his pleasure with a girl in my own bed, while he thought I was asleep in it." The authoress is all the way over on page three before she tells us that the second lady in her bed was her very own maid. On this same page she advises that "sex is personal, and its expression, in what ever form it takes, is private." She warns that she has changed the names of some prominent folk and fuzzed up the setting of certain spicy stories so as to obscure their identities "because" – primly, now, Hedy – "I do not intend to assist any reader's morbid curiosity."

Me neither.

Ecstasy and Me is either the worst piece of trash ever written or a revolving, blue-ribbon, pluperfect put-on. I mean, there is no way that somebody trying to give it to you straight could hit upon such an incongruous mixture of piety and sewer gossip and sustain it for 318 pages so that you are still laughing wildly when you reach the final words. (And they are too, too much, those signoff words: AUF WIEDERSHEN! Really, Hedy!) The publisher must have a cheekful of tongues when he has a psychologist preface us that the book "is probably as good for Miss Lamarr's psyche as it will be for many a guilt-ridden reader for whom this gutsy confessional may offer resultful therapy, if not instant emancipation." We have got Vietnam, the white backlash, Red China with nuclear missiles and grocery prices zooming into the blue, yet the publisher is so confident of mankind's future that he has put 50,000 of Miss Lamarr's scatalogical thesis in print.

I was on Capitol Hill in Washington the other day and every secretary up there has got a copy of *Ecstasy and Me* in their hot little hands. They are staying at their desks lunchtimes, bringing in thermos jugs of martinis so as to lubricate their tubes while they pant over this latest in a series of Hollywood confessionals. This book will, no doubt, be bought by types whose last book acquisition was the Gideon Bible they copped from a motel room. The girls are going to whisper about it at coffee klatsches in Pocatello, and I would like to draw the minimum wage for all the hours they'll spend speculating as to what famous person it was who did what to Hedy where.

Miss Lamarr is the only woman in the world who got into a house of ill fame by mistake (she ducked in while running from one of her six suspicious old husbands, who somehow didn't trust the poor girl) and who wound up . . . well, doing a turn on the wheel, you might say, because she didn't want to make a fuss and was reluctant to embarrass the nice young man who came in thinking she was a common . . . you know. There is a particularly lurid passage in which Hedy confesses that she could not keep her eyes off another of flickdom's chicks ("perfectly shaped breasts and semi-erect nipples . . .") and how, eventually, she made out with that chick and a few others of the same gender. Then she allows she "doesn't think anybody could call me a Lesbian." Possibly a deaf mute couldn't.

Once in a while Miss Lamarr calls time out to remind the "dear reader" (yes, she really calls you that!) that she is a lady of taste. "A good painting to me has always been like a friend. It keeps me company, comforts, and inspires." "I have usually been fascinated by mental types." "I have never liked beer. It's plebeian. It goes with dirty undershirts." Wonder what goes with dirty linen?

If there is a sensual experience that Miss Lamarr has not had, then it belongs to the future. She has made out in cars, dressing rooms, on the stairs, with girls, and in co-educational bunches. She has peeped on folks with Errol Flynn, attended funny shows in Mexico, and estimates her lovers at

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"hundreds." She drops names of world-renowned statesmen, both living and dead, in suggestive ways that will not comfort their wives or widows.

I cannot always believe Miss Lamarr. I cannot, for I conjure up pictures of Miss Lamarr (or her ghostwriter) cackling over the typewriter while reading the latest inspirational passage to friends who are breaking up, actually choking on mirth, and begging the author to please for God's sake stop it, no more, I just can't stand it. The author has, in fact, gone to court to prevent publication of her book. Miss Lamarr told a judge that what the publisher proposed to print was not what she had written. The judge was not convinced, and so loosed the work upon the land. May he live in torment forever.

Miss Lamarr goes on at length about how one rich husband went broke trying to buy up all prints of her first film, *Ecstasy*, in which she swam around in the nude, and tells about that terrible misunderstanding when she was charged with shoplifting some months ago. Mostly, however, she just ruts around in several sets of bedclothes.

Those of you who still have an occasional wild fantasy about ecstasy and you should know that if you scratch Miss Lamarr on the bottoms of her feet she becomes "paralyzed." Actually purrs. God, what I would give to have known that back in my days of innocence and acne!

Exemplary Novelists

by Geoffrey A. Wolff

As chairman of Rutgers' English department, Richard Poirier brings to this study of exemplary American novelists some finely-honed equipment for textual analysis. As an editor of *Partisan Review* and a frequent reviewer of contemporary fiction he enhances his technical competence by a concern for broad cultural configurations. The first thing to be said about

A World Elsewhere
by Richard Poirier
(Oxford; $5.75)

A World Elsewhere is that it interprets crucial passages from English and American novels in order to assemble general statements about American culture.

The writers he examines in detail are Cooper, Emerson, Thoreau, Hawthorne, Fitzgerald, Dreiser, Jane Austen, Twain, Joyce, D. H. Lawrence, Faulkner and James. Of the last four the author says:

> "The many distinctions that have to be made among these writers do not substantially modify a remarkable similarity among them: in each the expressed contempt for the way the world organizes itself is accompanied by aggressive efforts in the hero's imagination to give it an alternative order."

Poirier views American prose fiction as a catalogue of unfulfilled ambitions. For him, "the most interesting American books are an image of the creation of America itself, of the effort, in the words of Emerson's Orphic poet, to 'Build therefore your own world'." To the metaphor of building Poirier adds that of an expansion of consciousness, the creation of a visionary world unfettered by environment, by the "real" demands of economics, society, history or biology.

The ambition, then, is to create freedom in the mind as an alternative to the "ordinary world." The failure of the American novel to achieve this end is a function of the restrictions inherent in those things from which the novel traditionally draws its strength: dramatic action, historical and social panorama and explicit setting. It is Poirier's thesis that the novelist can only escape the tug of these formal conventions through style (diction, syntax, grammar and narrative focus), but that style alone is too empty a house to sustain the hero and, sooner or later, American writers are "always

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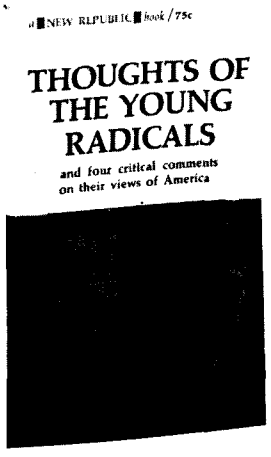
- Included in this volume, too, are four comments on their views of America by Dr. Robert Coles, Michael Harrington, Paul Seabury and Ronald Hamowy.
- The introduction is by Andrew Kopkind, Associate Editor of *The New Republic*, who has followed the activities of the young radicals over the past few years.



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forced to return their characters to prison."

A World Elsewhere attempts to discover the particular passages that signal either the failure of style to support itself (the surrender of visionary language to its surroundings), or the clamor of a strident, insistent style, demanding to be heard above the normal tone of voice of the novel. To this end Poirier promises to "treat books and paragraphs of books as scale models of America."

He reads very carefully. He is deft at revealing the sound of a voice or the look of a place. His sensitivity to the meaning of a word is unimpeachable, yet *A World Elsewhere* is the captive of its method. Its focus is too close; it tips its hand when it assumes that a book, and the "paragraph of a book" are in some way interchangeable. Poirier observes that what we remember most about a novel is a "momentary revelation" which carries, as he approvingly quotes William James, an "enormous sense of inner authority."

He has made an extraordinary investment in these moments and the commitment seems to have corrupted not so much his ability to *describe* the architecture of the total book as his awareness that such an architecture *matters*. He has a disturbing habit of sidling up to make an observation regarding an author's career, or his other books, only to break off abruptly for a return match with etymology or narrative voice. He is seeking to break a code and frequently, as a result, makes much of little or too little of a great deal.

However, Poirier has "located" (a word he too dearly loves) in American novelists an extreme self-consciousness about the ways they get their visions to the page. James' bold efforts to achieve a simultaneity of consciousness is only a single example of the kinds of radical stylistic strategies that include Emerson's announcement in "Nature": "I become a transparent eyeball; I am nothing; I see all." Moreover, looking at the work of John Barth, Thomas Pynchon, Norman Mailer and Vladimir Nabokov, Poirier discovers this obsession with the mode of vision to be a continuing phenomenon. Referring to his contemporaries in a recent review of *Giles Goat-Boy*, Poirier wrote:

"These are writers for whom the question of how to organize or tell a story is at the center of dramatic interest formerly occupied by the psychological career of a character." One's quarrel with Poirier, then, is not with his alertness to manner but with his tendency to separate it from its explicit context and make claims for its exclusiveness. There is a moral here in D. H. Lawrence's demands: "Never trust the teller; trust the tale."

Poirier makes much of the way Strether, in James' *The Ambassadors*, isolates himself because of his expanded consciousness. He indicts the world (presumably the world without as well as within the novel) for "the heartbreaking *waste* of heightened human consciousness, the waste of art on the finally relentless ordinariness of daily life." But surely it is James' aim to define both terms of a dialectic and keep them in dramatic conflict.

Poirier approvingly quotes Santayana's statement that the function of poetry is "to make us citizens, by anticipation, in the world we crave." But he concludes that because prose fiction makes demands not made by poetry, this world is yet unrealized. From that he assumes that the novel at its best has been a sum of destructions and that the novelist regards himself as an antagonist against society and its measurements.

This claim is too inclusive. While he is surely correct in his reading of Faulkner's "The Bear" as a series of repudiations and negative propositions, it is at least arguable that Hawthorne, for example, was eager to show what constrains man's humanity is not so much that his freedom of will is limited but that he has lost his sense of contact and community. Poirier, interested in tearing down old houses to build anew, is doubtless correct in assigning the metaphor of destruction a central place in the sensibility of American fiction; what he leaves unsupported is its loneliness of place.

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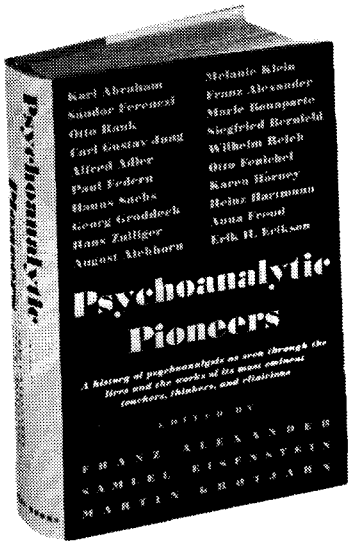

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Birth and Non-Birth

by James Ridgeway

There has not been much interest in changing the archaic and inhumane state abortion laws because they serve our sense of values so well. The effect of outlawing abortion for the sake of propriety, after all, has been to ensure the enterprise flourishes underground. About one million abortions are performed every year, most of them by competent doctors. The only real requirement for obtaining abortion in this country is money. The people who are most hurt physically from abortions are the poor and ignorant, who can't afford a clean operation. These are the people who, in desperation, inject themselves with detergent solutions and die.

Abortion
by Lawrence Lader
(Bobbs-Merrill; $5.95)

The abortion system also works to perpetuate the Victorian façade of the medical profession. Women pay for this obsession. They go through the back door, pay the doctor twice the price, and are left to stew in the guilt society has foisted on them. We have yet to achieve that basic decency of allowing women to decide whether they want to bear children.

In general, abortion is illegal throughout the country unless the operation is undertaken to save the mother's life. The state laws, however, are seldom enforced, and as a practical matter, hospitals are fairly free to interpret the statute in accordance with sound medical practice. But in most cases the doctors literally follow the laws. They don't care to be publicly associated with abortion and are afraid that the hospital will get a reputation as an abortion mill. In the background, of course, there are always zealous Roman clergymen in pursuit of their private fantasies.

The system is cruel. When a woman mental patient at Manhattan State Hospital was raped by another inmate who managed to escape from his security quarters, the hospital refused to perform an abortion. The child was born normal. Unfortunately for him, both the parents are likely to be confined as psychotics for the rest of their lives. The livelihood of the offspring depends on two aged and indigent grandparents.

Although the risk of bearing a deformed child runs 20 to 50 percent for a mother who has German measles early in pregnancy, doctors in hospitals are having a hard time convincing themselves they should perform abortions in such circumstances. As an example, Mr. Lader cites the case of a Brooklyn mother who got German measles in April, 1964, soon after she had become pregnant. Both the woman and her husband went to see the doctor and agreed on the necessity of abortion. The doctor gave them a letter verifying measles and pregnancy, and sent the woman to the nearest city hospital. The hospital told her to go home and wait until the last trace of measles disappeared. When she returned a few days later, the hospital asked her to wait until a particular obstetrician became available. She waited ten days, but the doctor was still tied up. The woman's own physician now became concerned and sent her with another letter to a voluntary hospital near her home. Here, she was admitted for an abortion with approval of three staff physicians and both the diagnosis and approval were entered on the hospital records. A week went by and she was still pregnant. Finally, the woman was informed that her uterus was too large for an effective dilation and curettage. She was discharged from the hospital and encouraged to bring the pregnancy to term with assurances that the baby would be born normal. The woman gave birth to a baby girl in January, 1965. The child was afflicted with deformities caused by German measles, ranging from congenital cataracts and congenital heart disease to severe deafness.

More recently in California, a Catholic doctor, who is a member of the state

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board of medical examiners, got the board to bring charges against nine doctors who performed abortions in their hospitals on women who had German measles in early pregnancy. (In all nine instances the fetuses were deformed.) The board, which prosecutes in conjunction with the state attorney general's office, wants to remove the doctors' licenses. This matter promises to become a test case in the state courts.

Despite these depressing situations, Mr. Lader feels things are likely to change for the better and his book is meant as a focus for reform. The American Law Institute has drawn up a model law on abortion which might be used as an alternative to the state statutes. It would permit abortion in cases where the pregnancy was the result of rape, incest, and in instances where a minor got pregnant or where it was obvious the mother would give birth to a deformed child. The pregnancy could also be terminated if two physicians certified the mother's physical or mental health would be "gravely" impaired by giving birth. Last year the American Medical Association discussed adopting such a position, but at the last moment decided not to do so. A concerted effort will be made to liberalize the abortion law in the New York State legislature in the coming session, and Mr. Lader believes there is a good chance for a reform measure to succeed there. Abortion reform groups have been organized in 22 states and they will lobby the legislatures. The American Civil Liberties Union is looking into the matter. More to the point, is the proposal by a group of New York Protestant clergymen. They plan to set up an abortion clinic which will refer inquiring women to doctors who will perform the abortions. This is something the Planned Parenthood Federation of America should have done long ago. It is too timid to take up abortion.

While the American Law Institute's proposed model law would widen the indications for abortion, it does not reach to the basic issue. It is not for the police, or the doctors, or indeed for the state, to decide which women qualify for abortions. It is a woman's right to determine whether or not she wants to bear children. The best proposal for a law comes from the New York

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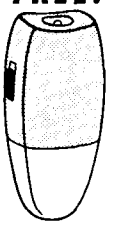

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Civil Liberties Union. It simply reads: "A person is guilty of abortion if he is not a duly licensed physican and intentionally terminates the pregnancy of another otherwise than by live birth." This frees the doctor from any criminal liability for performing abortions in any situation, and places responsibility for having the operation with the woman.

MUSIC

The Portraitist Portrayed

For many years, it has been Virgil Thomson's practice to make "portraits" in music; usually of his friends, sometimes of people who paid him a fee. "In all my portraits," he says, "only the sitter's presence is portrayed, not his appearance or his profession."

The book *Virgil Thomson* is not a memoir in the conventional sense, but rather a self-portrait in which the

Virgil Thomson
by Virgil Thomson
(Knopf; $7.50)

artist, using language and narrative techniques instead of music, nonetheless portrays a presence, and a highly attractive one. From his enormously eventful life, Thomson has built a narrative out of the amusing parts, relegating everything tragic, disastrous or boring to the background. But because the book is a narrative, both of Thomson's professions – those of composer and critic – figure in the portrayal.

To anyone not much interested in music, Thomson's book will be little more than another retelling of the high life in Parisian artistic circles during the vintage years between the wars, when foreigners (Stein, Joyce, Picasso), having moved in and become integrated, became central forces in the life of the city. As one of the first American pupils of Nadia Boulanger, Thomson knew everybody he wanted to know in musical Paris. As a friend of Gertrude Stein and Alice B. Toklas, he met and either liked or tangled with everybody in their literary or artistic circles. What saves his book from being merely another exercise in name-dropping (and he drops more than 900 names of the living and dead) is his overriding concern with his own life and work.

A series of accidents led to Thomson's appointment, in the fall of 1940, to the position of chief music critic of *The New York Herald Tribune*. For many years, the now defunct League of Composers had published, under the magnificently sensitive and catholic editorship of Minna Lederman, a quarterly magazine of extremely limited circulation (always less than a thousand) called *Modern Music*. Thomson's pieces on the French moderns of his time (which appeared regularly in *Modern Music* and almost nowhere else), together with his book *The State of Music*, caught the imagination of Ogden and Helen Reid, who, at that time, owned *The New York Herald Tribune*. In view of what subsequently happened, it is important to remember that other newspapers, *The Cleveland Plain Dealer* (with Herbert Elwell) and *The San Francisco Chronicle* (with Alfred Frankenstein) had already supplied their readers with the kind of intelligent coverage that New York finally got with Thomson. In this book, Thomson describes Frankenstein as "a reviewer far more sympathetic to my aims (and I to his) than any of my colleagues in New York."

What, then, were the aims? Thomson tells us that

> ". . . Papers that are privately owned and individually operated make their address to the educated middle class. *The New York Times* has regularly in its critical columns followed a little belatedly the tastes of this group; *The Herald Tribune* under Ogden Reid aspired to lead them. . . . The city desk . . found my results lively, especially my wide-ranging choice of subjects and my indifference to personalities already publicized to saturation, such as Marian Anderson and Arturo Toscanini. . . ."

Early on, Thomson staked claim on the area he was to cover during his 14 years at *The Tribune:*

> "Except for courtesy coverage of opening nights at the Philharmonic and the Metropolitan Opera, I must say that my choice of occasions was by the conventions of the time wildly capricious. My third review was of a woman conductor, Frédérique Petrides, leading thirty players in a piece by David Diamond. In my second week, reviewing two Brazilian programs at the Museum of Modern Art, I poked fun at the public image of that institution, at folk-lore cults in general, at all music from Latin America, that of Villa-Lobos in particular, and found an error in the museum's translation from the Portuguese. I also discovered, for myself at least, a group of young people called the Nine O'Clock Opera Company, all just out of the Juilliard School, singing in English at the Town Hall to a pianoforte accompaniment Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro.*"

Then as now, big-time critics were supposed to lend their authority to whatever was already successful. Thomson was concerned not with the business side of music, but rather the art itself. Fortunately, his editors supported him:

> ". . . From my first review, they received, as also I did, reams of protest mail. Mine I answered, every piece of it, and with courtesy. 'I thank you for your warmly indignant letter', was one of my beginnings before going on to some point raised such as, for instance,

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my own incompetence. . . ."

A great many people wanted his scalp:

"The most persistent of these . . . turned out to be the Metropolitan Opera Association, whose powerful hostesses, bankers, and corporation attorneys seemed to feel that their names on the board of any enterprise should render it immune to criticism. At the slightest *lèse-majesté* they would make truculent embassies to the paper demanding that somebody or other, usually I, be fired."

In response to this, the owners of the *Tribune* gave Thomson an increasingly free hand and he gathered around him a large staff of people trained in music, none of whom has ever touched his eminence, but many of whom – Arthur Berger, Peggy Glanville-Hicks and Lester Trimble, for instance – have surpassed him as artists. After he got bored and left the paper in 1955 most of his additions to the staff left. When the *Tribune* finally went out of business last summer, musicians had nothing to regret.

Since Thomson has long since lost all interest in reviewing, it is safe to refer to him, as a critic, in the past tense. For more than fifty years his writing has been wrong-headed as often as not. But of the American critics, he is the only one who has followed Bernard Shaw's prescription, to write what "even the deaf can enjoy." "My errors," he says, "were of two kinds, those which shocked the prejudices of readers and those which caused inconvenience to management." There is, however, a third area of error in his writing, no doubt the result of early training and conditioning, which is the uncritical acceptance of The New, whatever it is. Thomson points out that, though he didn't much like Schoenberg's music, he defended it anyway. And before he left *The Tribune*, Thomson wrote yards of copy in defense of John Cage without indicating that he liked to listen to his music. At the age of 70, Thomson tells us that he is bored with the whole show.

It is as a composer, of course, that Thomson wishes to be remembered. He joined *The Tribune* to help his ca-

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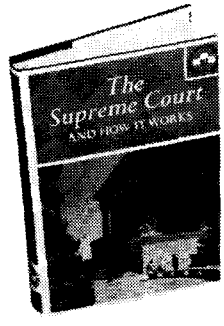

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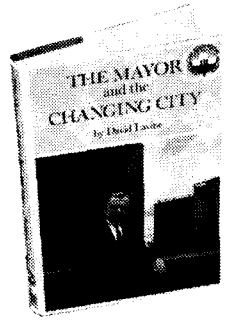

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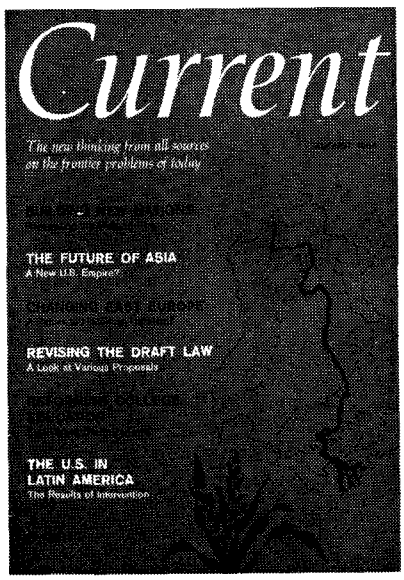

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reer as a composer, and when he threw it over . . .

". . . Minna Lederman is said to have exclaimed . . . 'But how will he get his music played?' Curiously enough, it has gone on being played; my ASCAP reports show almost no decline. . . ."

This is whistling in the dark: nobody ever liked Thomson's music much, and of his 499 best-qualified contemporaries, Thomson ranks around the middle. Galloping francophilia aside, his music is campy and sassy (the word is his own) to the point of being unmemorable. Listening to the recording of the greatly-abridged *Four Saints in Three Acts* a few days ago, I was struck less by the charm of the piece than the ugliness of the singing. If it were possible to cross Grandma Moses with Raoul Dufy and come out with a musician, the product might very well be Thomson. Having finished this book about himself, he is now at work on another opera. It will be curious to hear the results.

ROBERT EVETT

THEATRE

The Investigation: Unbroken Silence

The Investigation
(Ambassador Theatre)

According to the transcripts of the *Trial of Mulka & Others*, the occasion in which Germans examined the crimes of Auschwitz for the first time within the German legal structure, one of the judges asked the accused "to reflect most earnestly whether you do not wish to break, at this last minute, the ice of silence." No one did. The essential silence, filtered through the automatic language of detachment, was maintained. Where blood had once been their argument, now it was ice. Germany's frozen warriors, these were twenty-two men unwilling to be guilty alone. Implicit in their silence was the wish to turn on their accusers a phrase that has become familiar to everyone: "We are all guilty." Implicit in the court's sentence was the equally familiar, lofty response, at once unanswerable and paralyzing: "Perhaps, but some are more guilty than others."

Breaking the ice of silence is surely one of the dramatist's imperatives. It is a silence, however, that may be broken only from within. More than two years before his presentation of the Mulka & Others trial as *The Investigation*, Peter Weiss said that "it is most important that a production [of any play] should express a play's dualism." Earlier, he had referred to a novel of his which, though finished, he could view only as a fragment. "It is an interior monologue," he said, "and an interior monologue goes on as long as one lives." The experience of a play, he was suggesting, may be directed toward the arguments of other people, but dramatic pressure is derived from the arguments sealed into the mind of a man alone.

As a man alone, Weiss first chose painting. His first teacher, indeed his first acknowledged model, was Breughel, followed quickly by a weird assortment of fantasists, men whose work and lives could be described in common jargon as theatrical or dramatic, but who worked with materials different from or even alien to the actual language of theatre. In his teens, there was Herman Hesse. Later, he felt himself influenced by people such as Max Ernst, Dali, Kafka, and in yet another reversal of taste and inclination, Henry Miller. His career reads like a map of Europe and a survey of the verbal and visual arts: once a Czech citizen, he

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Three Views of America
Robert Brustein's Review
of
America, Hurrah
by Jean-Claude van Itallie

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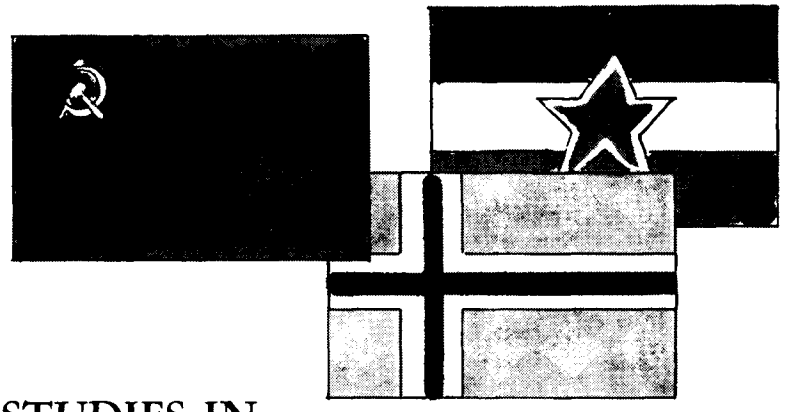
writes in German and lives in Sweden; once a painter, he wrote novels, directed his own "underground" films, and now makes a show of writing plays. A man with a thousand talented faces, Weiss seems to be skimming the surface of art while casting a watchful eye over its shifting fashions. A serious explorer of what might be called the deeper surfaces, he has at least admitted the fixed, unremitting fact of the interior monologue. Clearly, however, he is committed to wandering, a style of living that leaves only the narrowest of echo chambers for the voices inside.

It is a wasteful commitment. There is little way of knowing, nor does it matter, what might have been. Weiss's paintings, if they are known at all, are certainly not as available as his two essays in dramatic art, the *Marat-Sade* and *The Investigation*. His novels, too, are a relatively German secret, though his *Abschied von den Eltern* was published here in 1963 as *Leavetaking*, and several others are said to be on their way. Those of his films seen here last winter proved to be little more than fragmented games, as if a thoroughly silenced Ingmar Bergman had been trapped feverishly in Dr. Caligari's cabinet. It was possible to link them with the imagination behind the *Marat-Sade* only in terms of the concern with madness in one of them. Tics within the soul, the gesture broken by afterthought, the relentlessly open eye staring only, it would seem, at itself: these were Weiss' characteristic images, notations not of loneliness, but of a brain detaching itself from alien intrusions.

In *The Investigation*, the central event is a place remembered: Auschwitz. The central action is the process of remembering. The eye behind the action is meant to be, in effect, the hand of the reporter, presenting the trial itself, truth unadorned. He cuts, selects, and edits the voices of other people; and he does so, presumably, less from respect for the idea of documentary than from awe before the horrors of the event. There is no other way, he seems to be saying. Anything more selective – anything more from himself, any more art – would defeat the purpose and vulgarize the event.

As presented under Ulu Grosbard's direction, the most telling defeat is dealt the reporter. For a start, un-



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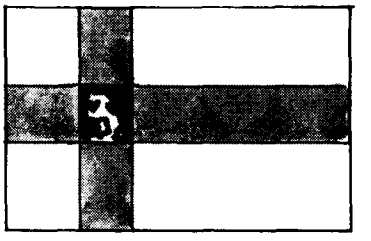

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adorned truth is a lie. The living newspaper pays daily witness to the improbability that the naked sentence will ever tell the same fact to different people. If Weiss, therefore, was trying to pretend that, once in a theatre, he needn't be trapped in theatricality, he was miserably mistaken. Art can contain objective reality even less comfortably than life. The smallest choice, no matter how it would like to be seen, remains a choice. Choose to enter the theatre, whether author or audience, you are in the insistent presence of art.

What confuses further is the misreading of documentary as a legitimate, expressive form. At its best, when the camera rather than the writer is the eye, it is still only a secondary, highly mediated, manner of seeing. The actors, at least, are the originals. A documentary film about war, for example, shows soldiers at war. The stage can do nothing of the kind. Thus, when Weiss and Grosbard collaborate in the fiction that documentary reality is possible on stage, they are bringing us neither to tears nor thoughts; they are reducing us to a numbing sense of disbelief.

Inevitably, theatre intervenes between the recitation of facts and the way they can be received. The tiniest gesture, the briefest pause, the most casual gaze beyond the proscenium have a way of inflating themselves into portraits or moments, none of them necessarily in line with the thrust away from decoration, comment, or interpretation. Worse, the ponderous laboring of behavioral truth on the part of all the actors in Grosbard's production succeeds only in blurring available reality. An American actor's sense memory exercise put to the service of a memory beyond the power of our ordinary senses is finally just a conceit, destined to place the emphasis where it cannot belong in such a presentation, namely, on the relative skills of the actor. The better actor might conceivably offer the more persuasive document. Yet I doubt it. Good or bad – and here the acting is almost uniformly sententious, self-conscious, heavily illustrative – it would still be acting. Under the lights, there must still be make-up. As a produced play, there must still be a designed environment; in this case, a courtroom, almost ravishing in appearance, a grouping of cells for each actor in the shape of a honeycomb, all of it in sleek, paneled surroundings of gorgeous blond wood.

If I have measured words tremulously against the pretense of the occasion, it is partly because I am left not merely bored by the "play," but that I feel pole-axed by frustration, defeated even before having had a chance to begin any effort I might make simply to *know* Auschwitz. I have been given an immobilized list of facts, a droning succession of words. But it is a communal cheat. The theatre has been trying to be everything but itself, and in so doing, it has left the most agonized moment in human history without an image.

GORDON ROGOFF

Correspondence

Economic Growth

Sirs:

TRB's October 22 criticism of Council of Economic Advisors Chairman Gardner Ackley for espousing only a 4 percent real (adjusted for price change) annual US economic growth rate from now forward is entirely sound, and John H. Makin's November 12 censure of TRB is entirely misinformed.

The average annual real growth rate was 4.5 percent during 1922-1929; this was accompanied by price stability, and the Great Depression came, not because the growth rate had been too high, but because labor and farm income lagged far behind profits and investment in plant and equipment. The average annual rate was five percent during 1947-1953; inflation 1947-1948 was not due to excessive growth, but to the way the war had been financed and premature abandonment of controls; and inflation in the peak Korean war year 1951 was due to the sudden intervention of the Chinese, speculative buying, some price extortion, and delay in imposing controls – not to excessive growth.

The average annual real growth rate 1962-1965 was 5.1 percent, and CEA properly insisted that this was accompanied by remarkable price stability (even today, CEA is properly insisting that "inflation" has been greatly exaggerated). In view of more rapid advances in technology, productivity, and civilian labor force now and in prospect than during these earlier periods, rising defense burdens, and shockingly neglected domestic needs, we should not now resign ourselves to a much lower growth rate.

The argument in support of the 4 percent growth goal, *i.e.* that we are now much closer to full capacity use than a year or two ago, is entirely beside the point. The growth-rate potential from a base of reasonably full capacity use is determined by annual increments in productivity and in the civilian labor force. Secretary of Labor Wirtz has recently pointed out that productivity is growing in the neighborhood of 3.8 percent a year, and projections are that the civilian labor force will grow far more than one percent a year, and perhaps more than 1½ percent a year, during the years immediately ahead. These two factors add up to more than 5 percent. Moreover, idleness of manpower and plant are still much too high, we can and should grow about 6 percent a year to restore reasonably full resource use by early 1968, and 5 percent thereafter.

Another factor in our economic-growth potential is the expansion of the plant-and-equipment productive base. Private investment in plant and equipment grew 14.7 percent in real terms from fourth quarter 1964 to fourth quarter 1965, compared with a real growth in the gross national product of 7.5 percent; and this dangerous imbalance is continuing in 1966. We thus have plenty of room to slow down this inordinate investment boom (induced in part by too much tax reduction for the wrong recipients), and still maintain enough of such investment to support a 5-6 percent GNP growth rate.

Mr. Makin is also wrong in stating that the difference between a 4 and 5 percent growth rate comes to $5.2 billion a year. The aggregate difference in real GNP between these two rates of growth for the ten years 1966-1975 inclusive would be in the neighborhood of $500 billion, or average about $50-billion a year. This indicates vividly the importance of an adequate growth rate, especially at a time when we are pleading inability to "afford" so much of what we most need to do.

The most serious consequence of inadequate economic growth is excessive

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unemployment. Full-time unemployment in the neighborhood of 4 percent during the past year is nothing to brag about. It necessarily means unemployment two to three times as high among Negroes and young people, and this is a growing menace. It also means part-time and concealed unemployment, bringing the true level of unemployment to almost 6 percent currently. The confusing conflict between the "structural" and "aggregate" explanations of unemployment cannot deny the fact that not one unemployed person can become employed (unless he displaces a currently employed person) without *spending money* to pay this unemployed person for the job he moves into. And as this additional spending adds to the rate of economic growth, which indeed is measured by the total volume of spending, the unemployed cannot become employed without an accordingly higher rate of economic growth. This is true whether the unemployed are now unemployed because there are not enough jobs, or because they are not properly trained, or because there is not a proper matching of the unemployed with unfilled jobs. Basically, therefore, unemployment remains too high because economic growth has been too low.

Mr. James Tobin, an excellent economist who served on CEA, is understandably impelled at times to defend current CEA policies. But in an article a year or so ago on the economic problems of the Negro, appearing in *Daedalus*, Mr. Tobin stated very vigorously that we need and should seek a higher rate of economic growth even than the above-5 percent then obtaining. He criticized severely the fiscal and monetary policies which were not sufficiently expansionary because obsessed with the problem of "inflation," and because they attached more weight to gold and balance of payments than to the impact of unmerited unemployment upon the lives of millions of people and upon the national wealth and product.

It seems clear that CEA's current espousal of the 4 percent growth rate represents CEA's long-standing avoidance of the mandate of the Employment Act of 1946 to define and attempt to reach goals of *maximum* levels of employment, production, and purchasing power. Instead, CEA has tended, in lieu of these goals, to make mere observations of what is happening and mere forecasts of what is going to happen. This avoids the risk of embarrassment when actual performance does not adhere to the Employment Act's focus upon our true needs. In early 1961, CEA set an *interim* target of 4 percent unemployment. This was never a defensible goal, but rather a forecast of what might happen without policies sufficiently strong and courageous to do better. After almost six years, we are still hovering around this *interim* target of 4 percent unemployment, with explosive consequences in some cities. And now, CEA seems to feel that it would be dangerously undesirable to press forward with the additional measures needed to drive unemployment lower.

Entirely similarly, the 4 percent growth rate now espoused by CEA is a tardy recognition of what is happening, not a prompt delineation of what ought to be done. From 1st to 3rd quarter 1966, our economic growth rate in real terms fell to an annual rate of 3.2 percent, seasonally adjusted. Unless corrected in time, this portends in due course rising unemployment, further cutting of social programs, and much economic danger and social conflict. CEA, under these circumstances, should be pressing forward with measures to accelerate the economic growth rate greatly, instead of bringing itself into line with what is now happening.

I fear that CEA is playing into the hands of those who always have urged that the unemployed and the poor and deprived be sacrificed to save the affluent from "inflation," and who have always been hostile to that high rate of economic growth which alone can help those vulnerable groups who are hurt first and hurt most when the economic growth rate falls far below the optimum. We had better find a way, of fighting such "inflation" as there may be, which restrains those battening on it, rather than a way which injures further those at the bottom of the heap.

Leon H. Keyserling
Washington, D. C.

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Kauffmann, *from page 15*

leaving obviously expensive books out of the question, would it be fair to say that a well-designed book doesn't cost any more to make than an ugly or commonplace one?

A small, rueful smile. "It's not a matter of money but of imagination. And interest."

I asked about his training for this work. He replied that he had never gone to a design school. He was educated at Columbia, where he majored in English, then worked in bookshops in New York and St. Louis. In 1945 he got a job with the firm of Reynal and Hitchcock. He was engaged by Albert Erskine, now executive editor of Random House, who was then doing editorial and design and production work. "Albert is now well-known as an editor," said Ford, "but it's not generally known that he's also a very capable designer. He taught me the fundamentals of book production."

If Erskine is an editor who can design, Ford is a designer with literary taste. He admitted diffidently that he had played a part in the publication of the poets Randall Jarrell and W. D. Snodgrass when he worked at Knopf (which he did from 1947 to 1959). He has a special taste for poetry. "And also I first worked with Eric Bentley at Reynal. Then he came to Knopf when I was there and now, I'm happy to say, he's here."

Authors often follow peregrinating editors, but the case of an author following a designer is a rarity.

"Well, I wouldn't want to give the impression that I'm really an active editor. It just happens that some writers I admire are friends of mine. In fact, in my very first job, at Reynal, I opted for design instead of editorial work. Most editors, no matter how good the firm is, have to spend most of their time working on books they aren't interested in or perhaps don't even like. But every design job, regardless of the contents, can be rewarding."

In his 12 years at Knopf, he learned an enormous amount about book production. (Which is not synonymous with design. Production is to design as building construction is to architecture.) "I also came under the influence of such fine designers as W. A. Dwiggins and Paul Rand and Warren Chappell and Alvin Lustig."

I noted, however, that his work at Atheneum in no way resembles what may be called the Knopf look. In my view Atheneum books are at least equally as attractive as Knopf books and are usually simpler. Would he say that it was only when he came to Atheneum that he was able to express his own ideas fully, to establish his personal style?

"Yes, I guess that's true. But I have to add that my colleagues here – the heads of this firm – have made that possible. Through their belief in design. Very few designers have the freedom that I have."

He confirmed that, besides the unusual fact that he makes some editorial recommendations, he is in a unique position: many production managers are officials of their firms, but he is the only designer who is a vice president and director of his house. This is both a recognition of the house's estimate of design and an empowerment for his work.

What did he think of the state of American book design generally?

"Very good. With some clear exceptions, it's been improving steadily in the last 10 or 15 years. Because of textbooks"

Would he explain? I knew that the design of textbooks had improved immensely, that they were now readable instead of repellent, but how had that affected trade books? Simply by example?

"Partly. But also much more practically. Textbook competition is so keen that the text publishers are hiring all the good designers they can find. So trade publishers have to pay more money to get any designers at all. And, inevitably, they get better designers."

We recrossed the bathroom to his office, and he pulled some books from his shelves as further instances, including *Paris Journals* by Janet Flanner, a simple and beautiful design, and *The Thousand Recipe Chinese Cookbook* by Gloria Bley Miller, a sumptuous and beautiful design.

Had he won any awards?

"Oh," he admitted, "we get our share of prizes."

On the stairs I asked him whether any relation had ever been shown between good design and improved sales.

His second rueful smile. "Not that I know. As I said, good design doesn't cost any more, but neither can you prove that it sells more copies of a book. I guess the only reason to bother is because you want to."

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NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

John Wain's *book,* Death of the Hind Legs *and other stories, was recently published by the Viking Press.* Robert Graves' *newest collection of poems is* Love Respelt. Lore Segal *is the author of* Other People's Houses. Martin Esslin *is the author of* Brecht, The Man and His Work *and* The Theatre of the Absurd. J. M. Edelstein *is bibliographer for the Humanities and lecturer on bibliography at the University of California at Los Angeles.* William Robert Miller's *anthology* The New Christianity *will be published in March by Delacorte.* Gerald Weales *is the author of several books for children, including* Miss Grimsbee *is a Witch.* Larry L. King *is the author of a novel,* The One-eyed Man, *which was published earlier this season by the New American Library.* Geoffrey A. Wolff *is literary editor of* The Washington Post. Gordon Rogoff, *who is on the faculty of the Yale Drama School, will, in conjunction with Robert Brustein, be writing theatre criticism for this journal during the current season.*

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